



# GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS' HANDBOOK



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

# CONTENTS



## INTRODUCTION

### 1. ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM (GCIS)

- 1.1 Legislative mandate 1
- 1.2 GCIS Strategic Support 1

### 2. GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION IN CONTEXT

- 2.1 Politics and the government communicator 3
- 2.2 Budget votes by departments 6
- 2.3 Media briefings and interactions 7
- 2.4 Proposed communication structure for national departments 7
- 2.5 The 10 basic principles of government communication 9

### 3. STRATEGISING FOR COMMUNICATION

- 3.1 Guidelines on putting together a communication strategy 11
- 3.2 Why strategise for communication? 11
- 3.3 Communication Strategy outline 11
- 3.4 Developing key messages 19
- 3.5 Government's communication cycle 20

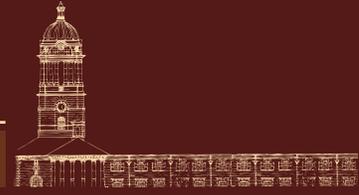
### 4. ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT-WIDE COMMUNICATION

- 4.1 Performance Scorecard for government communicators 25

### 5. COORDINATING AND PLANNING STRUCTURES

- 5.1 Communication Planning Meeting 31
- 5.2 Government Communicators' Forum (GCF) 31
- 5.3 Ministerial Liaison Officers' (MLOs) Forum 31
- 5.4 Calendar of Events 31
- 5.5 Induction for government communicators 32
- 5.6 Government Communicators' Awards (GCA) 32
- 5.7 *Bua Magazine* 32
- 5.8 Communicators' Web Page (GCF website) 32
- 5.9 Communication clusters 32

# CONTENTS



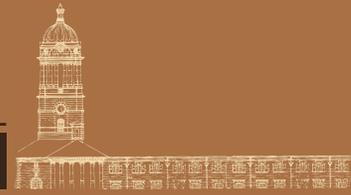
<b>6. COMMUNICATION RESEARCH</b>	
6.1 Approaches to research	34
6.2 Data analysis	35
6.3 Content analysis	36
6.4 Research tips	37
6.5 Elements for research specifications/terms of reference	37
<b>7. CRISIS MANAGEMENT</b>	
7.1 Handling a communication crisis	38
<b>8. DEALING WITH THE MEDIA</b>	
8.1 Media perceptions audit of government communication	39
8.2 What must a government communicator do?	40
8.3 A guide to media and communication engagement	41
8.4 Message presentation strategies	45
8.5 Other options to respond	45
<b>9. PUBLICATIONS</b>	
9.1 Official publications deposit and publication reference numbers	50
9.2 Publication strategy	50
9.3 Publication on the Internet	51
9.4 GCIS publications	51
<b>10. DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION</b>	
10.1 Characteristics of a development-communication approach	55
10.2 Examples of a development-communication approach	56
10.3 Guidelines for effective scribing during a public participation event	62
10.4 GCIS' regional distribution network	63
<b>11. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE</b>	
11.1 Why internal communication in the Public Service/Government?	65
11.2 Strategic internal communication	66
11.3 Principles of internal communication	67
11.4 Why will employees benefit from internal communication?	69
11.5 Current status of internal communication in government	70
11.6 Planning of internal communication	72

# CONTENTS



<b>12. CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT</b>	
12.1 What is a communication campaign?	76
12.2 Campaign development	76
12.3 Elements of a successful campaign	81
12.4 Getting assistance for your project from GCIS	82
<b>13. EVENT-MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES</b>	
13.1 Introduction	84
13.2 Types of events	84
13.3 General event planning checklist	85
13.4 Key questions	89
<b>14. DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A GOVERNMENT WEBSITE</b>	
14.1 Introduction	92
14.2 Steps in developing or revamping a website	92
14.3 Best-practice guidelines for quality government websites	95
14.4 Managing the website	100
14.5 Maintaining the website	101
<b>15. USEFUL LINKS</b>	
15.1 Search engines	103
15.2 Grammar and style	104
15.3 Dictionaries	104
15.4 Currency Converter	104
15.5 African digital library	104
15.6 Online translation	104
15.7 News sites	104
<b>16. APPENDICES</b>	
16.1 Government Communication Policy Guidelines	
16.2 Generic Scoreboard for Heads of Communication	
16.3 <i>Editorial Style Guide</i>	

## Introduction



In a rapidly changing environment, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) strives to achieve integration, coordination and high levels of professionalism in the government communication profession. Government communicators are indispensable links between the public and government. This relationship is important for a thriving democracy and to ensure that government communicates with the public on matters pertaining to the improvement of their lives.

The *Government Communicators' Handbook* is a toolkit for government communicators and assist them to understand their roles within the communication system. The handbook also helps government communicators by putting issues into context and providing background, easy reference tips and practical guidelines on issues they will come across in their daily work.

The handbook is designed to add value and further equip government communicators with the requisite knowledge to be more effective and professional in the performance of their duties.

### **Overview**

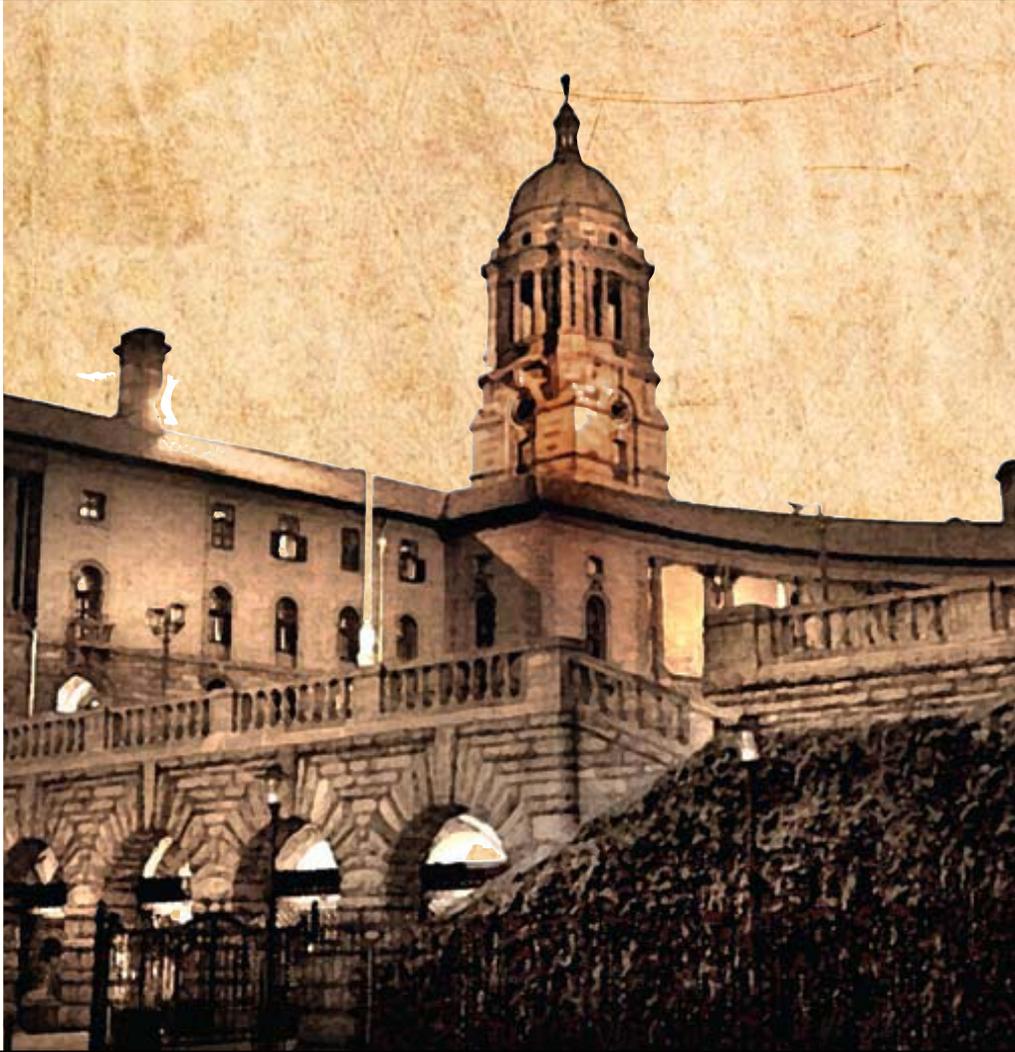
The handbook deals with, among other things, the role of the GCIS; the Performance Scorecard for government communicators; how to deal with the media; advertising and distribution strategies; communication research; campaign development; crises management; development communication; internal communication; and developing and maintaining a government website.

It also includes the *Editorial Style Guide* that can be used daily in writings to ensure uniformity in the presentation of messages, as well as the *Government Communication Policy Guidelines*, which include advice on media policy, marketing, crisis communication and local government communication.

Appendices to the Policy Guidelines are available on the Government Communicators' Forum (GCF) website: <https://www.gcis.gov.za/gcf>.

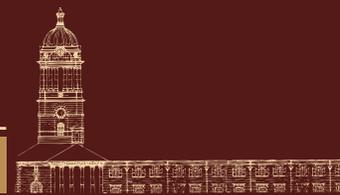
# CHAPTER I

## ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM (GCIS)



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### **ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM (GCIS)**

#### **1.1. Legislative mandate**

The GCIS was established in terms of Section Seven (subsections two and three) of the Public Service Act, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994), as amended, and officially launched on 18 May 1998.

The GCIS is located in The Presidency and is responsible for setting up the government communication system and continuously working with the rest of government to communicate and inform the public about the policies and programmes of government aimed at improving their lives. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the GCIS attends Cabinet meetings and is the official government spokesperson.

#### **1.2. GCIS strategic support**

In supporting government to implement its activities, the GCIS offers a variety of key strategic services.

- **Media bulk-buying**

*Cabinet Memorandum no 8 of 1998* mandates the GCIS to facilitate placement of all national government campaign advertising through the media bulk-buying contract approved by National Treasury.

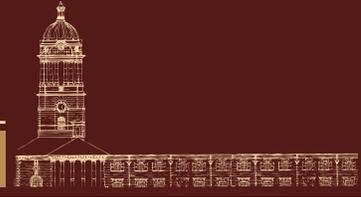
This authority was delegated to the GCIS, taking into account the recommendations of the *Communication Task Team (Comtask) Report* that government was not taking advantage of the benefits of economy of scale realised through coherent and centralised government media bulk-buying. Ad hoc advertising by national government departments resulted in government resources not being utilised cost-effectively and efficiently.

The GCIS was mandated to develop guidelines on the equitable distribution of advertising expenditure for government. A document entitled, *Guidelines on Equitable Distribution of Advertising Expenditure by Government*, was developed by the GCIS and shared with all directors-general early in 2005 to ensure that government departments understood the rationale behind the centralisation of media planning and buying in government.

- **Media monitoring and content analysis**

The GCIS monitors and analyses media coverage of government's programmes and policies. It also conducts ongoing, quantitative analyses of media opinion-forming and agenda-setting. Media content analysis contributes towards improved understanding of the media landscape – an outcome that contributes towards enhancing the presentation of government's policies and programmes.

## CHAPTER I



This monitoring and content analyses enable the GCIS to:

- make decisions on interventions in the media environment
- inform government's communication strategy
- assist other government departments and agencies with analysis of the communication environment relevant to the programmes and campaigns of government
- assess the effectiveness of government communication messages.

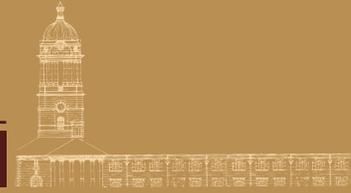
# CHAPTER 2

## GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION IN CONTEXT



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION IN CONTEXT

The approach to government communication takes its cue from the constitutional imperative of freedom of information and the objectives of building a truly democratic state. This requires government to maintain continued interaction with the people to be able to understand their needs. This type of communication will enhance an informed and appropriate response to people's needs to enable all South Africans to become active and conscious participants in social transformation.

Government communicators have a critical role to play in harnessing goodwill for productive purposes, in helping to shape the national mood and nation-building. They should be able to address these issues by using an appropriate mix of activities and channels driven by a strategic overview. A fundamental need of government communication is to reach the majority of the population, especially the disadvantaged and those previously marginalised from all forms and channels of communication. Communication trends have influenced the way governments interact with the public and these trends are triggered by recognising the role of information as an agent of empowerment. Having communicators who are always at the cutting edge of their profession and understanding the environment better is critical.

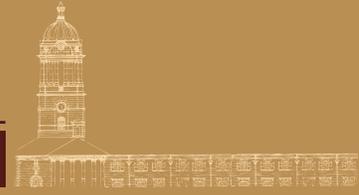
#### 2.1. Politics and the government communicator

If there is one area of governance that fully represents the political and administrative interface, it is the task of communication. The communicator straddles the relationship of political and administrative operations and harmonises the varying emphasis of these two fraternities to emerge with messages that reflect their unity of purpose. It is the government communicator who must package messages in a manner that harmonises the administrative and political arms of government.

Indirectly, the work of a communicator is likely to be related to party-political expression as they communicate 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.

We need to make the fine distinction between communicating government policies and improperly using one's position to promote or prejudice the interest of a political party. Government communicators are public servants, whose operational code includes impartiality and professionalism as encapsulated in the Public Service Regulations. Section 36 (c) of the Public Service Act, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994), 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 draft up or publish any writing or deliver a public speech to promote or prejudice the interests of any political party.*

## CHAPTER 2



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 guidelines regarding the conduct of government communicators should be followed during an election period:

### **2.1.1. Guidelines on government communication during an election period**

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

On 31 March 1999, Cabinet decided on a 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.

The guidelines were adopted during the local government elections in 2000 and the national and provincial elections in 2004. However, it is important to note that the provisions of the Public Service Act, 1994 were amended in 2007. They assist government communicators and other relevant public servants in determining the specific parameters within which they should conduct their work during an election period.

#### **2.1.1.1. Scope of application**

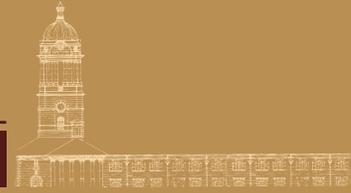
According to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), an election period is the period during which the IEC's Code of Conduct and the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa's regulations apply. This period is determined once the date for the election has been announced, party lists are submitted and participating parties and candidates confirmed. The period ends when election results are certified and announced.

The regulations state that during an election period:

- state-financed media will not be used for the purpose of promoting or prejudicing the interests of any political party.
- state-financed media should continue to be used for the distribution and dissemination of government information.

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. Examples of state-financed media include *BuaNews Online*, internal and external government newsletters and magazines.

## CHAPTER 2



These regulations apply only to communicators and other relevant public servants. Ministers, deputy ministers, premiers, Members of Executive Councils (MECs) and all political representatives, contractual workers and employees in role-playing posts in government are regulated by the *Ministerial Handbook*.

### **2.1.1.2. Public Service Regulations, 2001**

Paragraph C.2.7 of the Code of Conduct for the Public Service provides that: *An employee does not abuse her or his position in the Public Service to promote or prejudice the interest of any political party or interest group.* Paragraph C.2.9 provides that *an employee recognises the public's right of access to information, excluding information that is specifically protected by law.*

### **2.1.1.3. Public Service Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 30 of 2007)**

Section 32 of the Public Service Amendment Act, 2007 provides that: *An employee may be a candidate for election as a member of the National Assembly, a provincial legislature or a municipal council, subject to the Code of Conduct contemplated in Section 41(l)(b)(v) and any other prescribed limits and conditions. An employee elected as a member of the National Assembly or a provincial legislature or a full-time member of a municipal council shall be deemed to have resigned from the Public Service with effect from the date immediately before the date he or she assumes office as such member. An employee appointed as a permanent delegate of the National Council of Provinces shall be deemed to have resigned from the Public Service with effect from the date immediately before the date he or she assumes office as such delegate. An employee elected as a member of a municipal council may only remain an employee in the Public Service if he or she serves as a part-time member of the council; and shall comply with Section 30(1).*

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

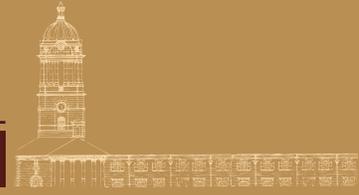
### **2.1.1.4. Constitutional rights and obligations**

Government communicators and their departments should continue meeting the obligation of government to provide information to the people.

They should continue exercising their responsibility to articulate, promote and defend the policies, programmes and actions of government.

Like all other South Africans, communication officers have freedom of association. Subject to the provisions of the Public Service Amendment Act, 2007 and Public Service Regulations, they may belong to any political party of their choice.

## CHAPTER 2



### 2.1.2. Use of parliamentary forums

Because these forums are a key source used by the media, it is an opportunity for government to set the media agenda.

#### 2.1.2.1. Guidelines in answering questions for written reply

- The process of questions and answers (Q&As) for written reply is a standard item on the Parliamentary calendar.
- It starts in mid-January and continues until the first Friday of December of the same year.
- This process consists of Members of Parliament (MPs) posing written questions to ministers who have seven working days to respond.
- Parliament releases the responses immediately after they have been forwarded to the author (MP).
- Upon receiving the response, the MP has the prerogative to decide which communication route to take.
- The MP can decide to either call a media briefing and/or or release it to the media with a supporting statement.
- The ministry in turn has no control over the released response.

#### 2.1.2.2. The role of government communicators

- Communicators should always provide more information on the replies. Answers containing detailed information, including statistics and figures, must include explanatory notes that provide context.
- In dealing with enquiries from the media on issues relating to parliamentary replies, communicators must always use right of reply to further contextualise figures.
- Communicators must be aware and consulted at all times to ensure that they plan around communication implications of the responses to questions.
- In case the need arises, communicators should secure ministers and directors-general (DGs) to make further pronouncements in one-on-one interviews and media briefings.

#### Recommendation

The Q&As have a strategic importance to Parliament and present communication opportunities for government. In this context, departments should treat them as a continuation of the communication programme that commenced with the State of the Nation Address (SoNA) and ensure that the core message **“Working together, we can do more”** is reflected in communication.

### 2.2. Budget votes by departments

The presentation of budget votes is an opportunity to provide more detail of the implementation of government's implementation activities. Communicators should use this opportunity as a communication channel. All

## CHAPTER 2



the budget votes are preceded by the presentation of strategic plans to the parliamentary committees. Communication by principals must ensure that information is shared in a form and language that people understand and can relate to.

### **2.3. Media briefings and interactions**

Media briefings on the implementation of government activities are instrumental in disseminating focused messages to the broader public and stakeholders. Communication on the visible achievement of milestones, which have a direct impact on the public, should be highlighted.

There are various types of media briefings that are used as channels to communicate the Programme of Action (PoA) and broader service delivery. These include: post-SoNA media briefings, quarterly media briefings, DG briefings, the mid-year progress report and strategic review, continuous briefings by principals and post-Cabinet media briefings (by the CEO of the GCIS).

#### **2.3.1. Portfolio and select committees**

Ministers, DGs, CEOs of state-owned enterprises and senior officials regularly brief these committees. These meetings are open to the media and communication strategies should be in place to deal with issues affecting departments.

#### **2.3.2. National Assembly and National Council of Provinces (NCOP)**

Ministers and deputy ministers deliver speeches and provide oral responses to questions in these two houses. Ministers and deputy ministers also make policy statements and these are communication opportunities afforded to government to make pronouncements on issues affecting the country.

#### **2.3.3. Parliamentary Press Gallery Association (PGA)**

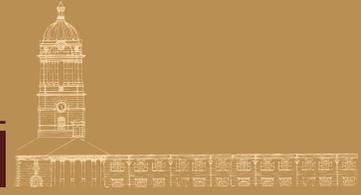
The PGA is a recognised structure of the South African National Editors' Forum. The PGA's membership is made up of the most senior political journalists in the country and they are permanently based at Parliament.

They cover all stories within the parliamentary precinct. It has a representative structure, which promotes the interests of its members. Ministerial liaison officers (MLOs) and heads of communication (HoCs) are encouraged to forge good relationships with PGA members as they cover most political stories happening in Pretoria and Cape Town.

### **2.4. Proposed communication structure for national departments**

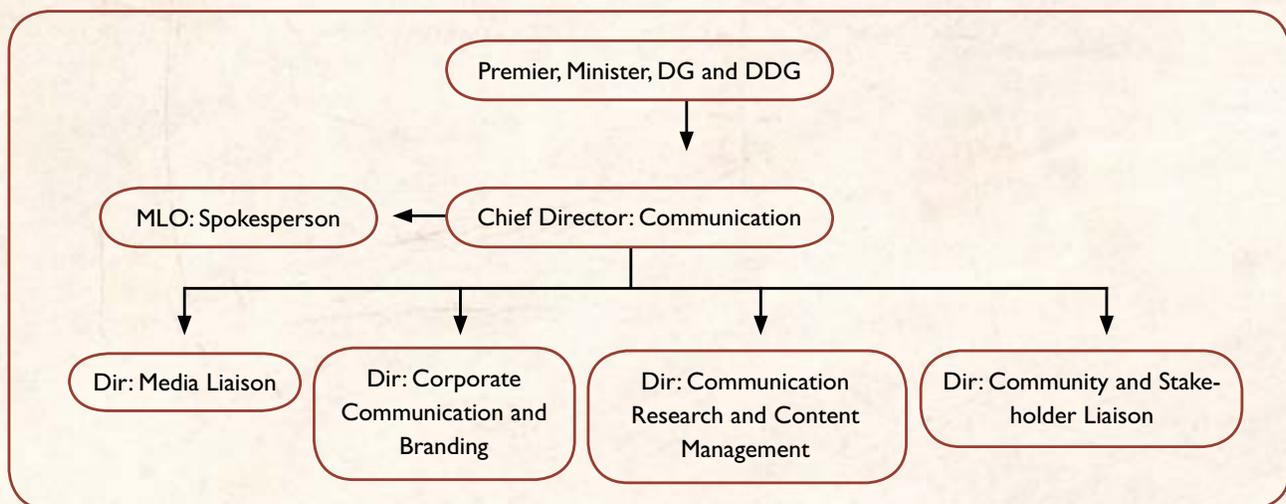
These guidelines set out a norm for departmental communication structures and functions and are informed by the two Cabinet memorandums on communication as approved by Cabinet:

## CHAPTER 2



- Cabinet Memo 8 – 1998
- Cabinet Memo 16 – 2000.

**The structure can be adapted to fit the responsibilities of a particular department. What cuts across is that the level of HoC should not be below that of Chief Director.**

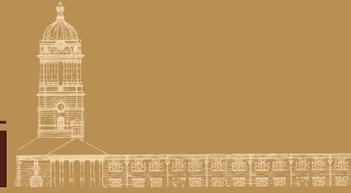


### 2.4.1. Chief Director

The HoC is responsible for heading communication within a department and giving overall direction to the department, as a strategic aspect of government.

The Chief Director is:

- the HoC in the department
- the spokesperson of the department
- sits in management meetings so as to be kept informed of relevant issues affecting a particular department/ province
- is responsible for drafting and implementing the communication strategy
- is responsible for promoting integrated communication with all spheres of government.



### 2.4.2. Directors

- Director: Community and Stakeholder Liaison
- Director: Communication Research and Content Management
- Director: Corporate Communication and Branding
- Director: Media Liaison.

Pending the size of the department and the amount of its work, the department can assess which of the key activities are important for the department. Based on that assessment, a decision could be made whether to have all the functions or merge them according to the department's needs and affordability.

### 2.5. The 10 basic principles of government communication

#### 2.5.1. Government work is a public activity

- In any democracy, government is elected by its people, and is therefore an institution for the people and by the people. It is essential that ordinary citizens are constantly informed about government work and empowered to take active part in it.
- Government needs to make an effort to continually counter insinuations that government work is secretive whenever and wherever they surface.

#### 2.5.2. A central communication service must have the authority to carry out its work – it must be located in the highest office

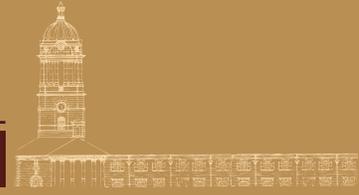
- To ensure legitimacy and effectiveness, all government communication must have its genesis and coordination from the highest office in the Government's structure.
- On all other levels, communication structures must be placed in the offices of political principals.

#### 2.5.3. Political principals are the main communicators

- Government communication must, in the main, be done by individuals holding positions of political oversight or leadership.

#### 2.5.4. Everyone in government is a communicator

- Everyone working in government is indirectly a communicator and must therefore assume the role of an emissary and be a positive representative of government.
- This is pertinent in every public service member's behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal interaction with people.



### **2.5.5. Communication must be based on an integrated communication strategy and programme (with core messages that guide all actors)**

- The central communication service must coordinate the formulation of the main and all encompassing communication strategies for the whole of government.
- All different spheres and parts of government must at all times communicate in one voice, meaning there must be consistency in messaging.

### **2.5.6. Communication structures do not determine policy – they articulate it**

- Government policy and priority are pre-determined and communication structures are there to inform and accurately disseminate them to the public.

### **2.5.7. Communication is more than just media liaison**

- In communicating, special efforts must be taken to seek, evaluate and, where feasible, employ all available measures or tools to get the message across.
- In implementing major campaigns in particular, a multimedia approach must be adopted for effective message diffusion and sufficient reach.

### **2.5.8. Direct communication and mutual exchange of views with the public is the most effective form of communication (where possible, there should be communicators in all localities)**

- Communication structures must be established to enable interaction, mediated or otherwise, between government and the public.

### **2.5.9. In working out campaigns and programmes, there must be a deliberate effort to understand the communication environment**

- Research is an integral part of the communication process.
- In any event, the success of communication depends on the accurate diagnosis of the surroundings that will inform, among other things, the selection of appropriate messages, target audiences and media platforms.

### **2.5.10. Communication campaigns work best when they are carried out in partnership with others outside of government**

- Government does not function in a vacuum and for maximum communication impact, especially in terms of credibility and reach, role players such as non-governmental organisations, opinion-makers and other important figures need to be involved.

*(Joel Netshitenzhe, Challenges of Government Communication: The South African Experience, 18 March 2003)*



# CHAPTER 3

## STRATEGISING FOR COMMUNICATION

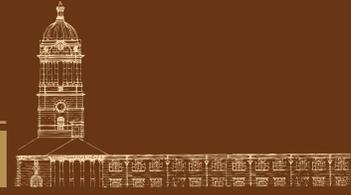
Strategising



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





### STRATEGISING FOR COMMUNICATION

#### 3.1. Guidelines on putting together a communication strategy

- Check external perceptions of your programme among potential target audiences before you start. Think about how you fit into the external horizon. This will help you develop a communication strategy that gives you a distinct and credible voice.
- Be clear on the principles underpinning your strategy. Some may be self-evident, like producing honest, succinct, credible and cost-effective communication.
- Develop some simple messages and model how these might work in different contexts – a press release, report, newspaper article, website, etc. Make sure your project is branded in line with your communication objectives.
- Be clear about your target audiences and user groups and prioritise them according to importance and influence relative to your objectives. Don't just only think about the "usual" ones that are known by all.
- Think about both the actual and preferred channels your target audiences might use and challenge yourself about whether you are planning to use the right ones for maximum impact.
- Include a full list of all the relevant communication activities, developed into a working project plan with deadlines and responsibilities.
- Keep the communication programme simple and include key deadlines, milestones and review points.
- Communication should be allocated enough budgetary resources to carry out its activities. At least 5% of the total funded budget in the department should be allocated to communication.
- Evaluate the implementation and impact of the strategy and the implementation process that has taken place.

#### 3.2. 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 communicate in a noisy world, competing for attention with voices that have objectives that are different and often opposing. And we do so in a world made up of a vast array of interests and concerns, and a world in which everyday concerns weigh heavily on most people.

#### 3.3. Communication strategy outline

There are many ways of approaching this challenge – what follows is a process that has emerged out of GCIS' own experience in strategising for communication and has served us well. However, this is not a mechanical process that yields automatic results – it needs hard work and lots of thought. Each step is of critical importance, and interlinked.

It is important that research should inform a communication strategy because it gives insight to the dynamism of the environment and the challenges it brings.

## CHAPTER 3



### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The strategy aims to deliver an effective and efficient communication approach for the Government Communication Programme. This strategy provides a framework to ensure that the department manages communication in a planned and coordinated way and maintains the commitment to effective and timely communication. The strategy also provides for the strategic alignment with the national communication framework of government and the Government priorities linked to the five-year electoral mandate.

- this part also deals with pre-history
- why do we need a strategy?
- facts that locate it within a broader and longer term development
- information on a particular programme or campaign.

### REVIEW OF COMMUNICATION OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR

- Before developing the next year's communication strategy, it is important to reflect briefly on the experiences and the lessons of the past year/programmes/campaigns.
- An assessment of the implementation of the communication strategy (How did we do in relating communication messages to the public?).
- Deal with all the weaknesses identified over the past year.

### CONTEXT AND SCOPE

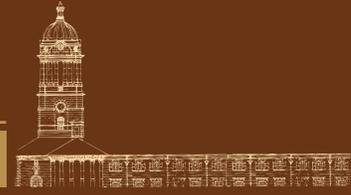
Within the context of government's electoral mandate and pursuant to government's vision of contributing to and promoting the creation of a better life for all – communication is important and central to all key decisions of government.

- Scope – mandate of government.
- Scope – mandate of the particular department.
- Scope – the period which the strategy will serve (one year, two years or five years). (The communication strategy is for five years, linked to the electoral cycle and updated annually to be relevant in dealing with issues within the environment).

#### **What informs communication during a particular period?**

- The department's mandate.
- The State of the Nation Address (SoNA), (State of the Province Address and provincial Exco makgotla for provinces), the National Communication Strategy, government's Programme of Action (PoA) as identified by both the Cabinet Lekgotla of January, departmental strategic plans and objectives and the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF).

## CHAPTER 3



### ENVIRONMENT

This will define the terrain and environment in which you choose to communicate. It should deal with issues such as 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.

- The environment is impacted upon by changes and developments within which communication is taking place.
- The communication environment is to be informed by research.

Understanding our environment requires thinking about the particular matters we need to deal with:

- mandate
- public mood
- political issues
- media agenda
- demography
- forces at play
- attitudes and concerns.

### STRATEGIC EMPHASIS

- What is the strategic emphasis of your strategy? (e.g. safeguarding the country against external threats).
- Core issues – in support of the Government objectives as contained in the MTSF document and the strategic plan of the department.

Communication should put more emphasis on the key priorities of the department.

- Defence Update 2025. The Defence Update must provide a cogent argument on the levels of defence required to respond to the strategic environment, and the requirements posed by the foreign and security policy of government to meet the strategic defence objectives.
- Progress made in peace-support operations (PSOs). South Africa continues to be perceived as an honest broker and a reliable partner in international affairs. Continuous attention must be given to popularising the country's participation in peacekeeping efforts on the continent. Vigorous communication is required regarding the progress made in PSOs in Africa with regard to post-conflict reconstruction (disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration, repatriation and re-settlement) and development.

## CHAPTER 3



### COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

All strategising is about how to achieve our communication objectives. However, if we are unclear about our objective or get it wrong, then the rest will be of little or no value.

What are we trying to do: Build support for a policy proposal? Reassure people? Dispel misleading information? Halt or reverse the acceptance of misleading information by others? Persuade opponents of a policy to change their minds? Change dangerous behaviour? Encourage participation in a campaign or election?

We can also:

- popularise
- mobilise
- ensure
- educate
- raise awareness
- reassure
- ensure.

### COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Our broad objectives considered in the context of the communication environment will lead us to identify specific challenges that we will face and which we will have to meet successfully to achieve our broad objectives. Challenges could be developments, which we must expect and take full advantage of, and obstacles, which we need to overcome.

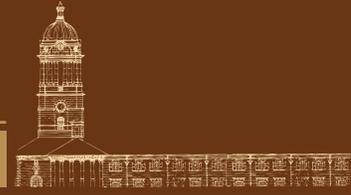
The key communication challenge could be to sustain the generally positive mood around the Programme of Action of the departments by maintaining the momentum and ensuring that people see benefits from the implementation.

### MESSAGE AND THEMES

It is critical to indicate the themes and concepts that are associated with the communication effort being undertaken.

- It is important to avoid making a simple list of messages.
- When adopting a core message, it is critical to integrate it with the Government's core message for the year.

## CHAPTER 3



### CORE MESSAGE

**EXAMPLE:** *WORKING TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE*

**Give an explanation as to what the message aims to achieve and what does it inspire people to do and why).**

### EXAMPLE THEMES: - departmental specific

- An economy that benefits all
- Social services for all
- Batho Pele – Serving all the people
- Safety and security for all
- Working for the renewal of Africa and the creation of a better world.

## MESSENGERS

A campaign must have its own voice. Who is to speak for it? To whom? And in what ways?

The strategy proceeds from the premise that messages have more impact if they are delivered by our principals rather than public servants. As such, there is a need to increase public appearances by the principals.

- **Political principals are the chief spokespersons of government:**
  - President/Deputy President
  - Minister and Deputy Minister
  - Directors-General and senior members of the department, etc.
- **Other messengers can include third-party endorsers.**

## COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

In most cases, this is complex as different target audiences are best reached in different ways.

### Internal:

- notice boards
- Internet
- internal newsletters
- meetings
- briefings
- intranet

## CHAPTER 3



- plasma screens
- CD-Roms and other promotional material.

### **External:**

- Web-page on [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za) and [www.thepresidency.gov.za](http://www.thepresidency.gov.za)
- training of public liaison officers
- print and electronic media
- community development workers (CDWs)
- billboards
- loud hailers.

## **STAKEHOLDER SEGMENTATION**

Purpose: To know your stakeholders/partners.

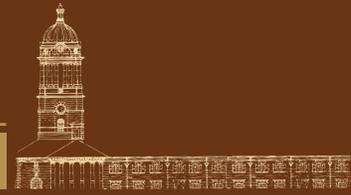
### **Internal:**

- public servants
- national departments
- parastatals
- municipalities
- provinces.

### **External:**

- private sector
- civil society
- organised labour
- sectoral groups
- faith-based organisations
- the media
- farmers
- consumers
- academics
- international audiences.

## CHAPTER 3



### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

#### EXAMPLE

Priority issue	Desired outcome	Target audience of communication strategy	Key message to be communicated	Tools
Increasing sustainability of agricultural practices by enhancing crop diversity and moving away from intensive practices.	Raise awareness about the importance of agricultural biodiversity on environmental and human health, leading to changed behaviour patterns.	Farmers	The value of changed cultivation practices for increased long-term crop yields and thus increased outcome.	Meetings
		Consumers	The value of eating a diverse diet for good health.	Print and electronic media CDWs billboards loud hailers.

### COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME AND MILESTONES

The communication programme 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.

There are two parts: communicators can decide to do a programme in phases or just broad and general without phases. This will depend on the type of activity or why the strategy is being put together:

- ensuring government's effectiveness to deliver messages
- strengthening relationships with the media
- third-party endorsements
- commissioning TV or radio documentaries around the impact of government's programmes
- regular feature articles, guest editorials and opinion pieces
- one-on-one interviews (these are more effective than media conferences and rather reserve the latter for breaking news)
- using radio and the community media more as primary channels to disseminate information to communities.

## CHAPTER 3



### EXAMPLE

Programme	Targeted milestone	Communication approach	Budget	Responsibility	Time frame
Progress made in peace and security operations.	Lowering the flag in Burundi.	A multipronged approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using the Department of Defence and Military Veterans' internal magazine</li> <li>• media briefings</li> <li>• print and electronic media.</li> </ul>	R200 000	Head of Communication (HoC)	8 August 2009

### ACTION PLAN

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.

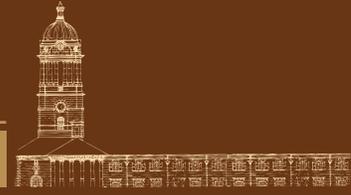
### EXAMPLE

Event/Opportunity	Activity	Action	Channels	Budget	Time frame
Recognising improved service delivery.	Female Farmer of the Year Competition.	Popularising 2009 competition and thus raising awareness on the importance of farming for the country.	Electronic and print media adverts.	R450 000	November 2009

### MEDIA ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The Media Engagement Plan consists of a detailed plan of interviews, press briefings, media/journalists to be targeted, opinion pieces, and most importantly, a statement of key messages, and questions and answers (frequently asked questions) for communicators and writers to use.

## CHAPTER 3



### STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

Highlight all the structures involved and the processes to be followed. This will include:

- consultations with stakeholders
- approval by management.

### MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS

How will you know if you have succeeded? When thinking about initial objectives and activities, it is worth building in some simple performance indicators and evaluation measures at the start.

These could include:

- “Before and after” research to track awareness of your communication messages among important target audiences
- evidence of translation of research findings into policy or practice
- evaluation of participation in and feedback from events and other activities of government (public participation events, etc)
- tracking media coverage, including volume and nature of coverage
- tracking parliamentary discussion of your programme or project
- tracking expenditure and also assist in sharing costs where the need arises with other departments
- helping to deal with all unforeseen issues
- monitoring website usage.

Building the discipline of evaluation into your strategy from the start allows you to use the information to review and refine your strategy and keep it as a living, flexible document that supports the implementation of the PoA.

#### 3.4. Developing key messages

Key messages are simply key messages and not something else:

- Key messages are not statements. They are also not briefings or comprehensive statements of information.
- They articulate the essentials of government’s position on critical issues.
- They should inform all communication on the issue: interviews, statements, articles, posters, pamphlets, etc.

Developing a communication strategy does not, on its own, lead to more effective and integrated communication. What is more critical is the capacity to ensure concrete implementation.



### **The 4X4 format reflects their character:**

- four propositions encapsulating government's position, which any spokesperson should get across, whatever else they say
- for each of the four, another four to elaborate and explain and use in response to further questions.

### **Key messages generate and develop a government discourse**

- Key messages over time generate a body of discourse that consistently reflects government's position.
- Consistency of style and terminology is therefore critical.
- Consistency of positions is critical – drafters should always check previous messages on related topics.
- Consistency in formulation on key issues helps communication, but formulations should also be sensitive to the current environment.

### **Key messages communicate strategic directions**

- Key messages are informed by the strategic directions of government policy.
- Therefore, when drafting them, don't rely on desk research only; we need the guidance of those informed with strategic perspectives.
- While HoCs should be informed accordingly, other senior officials and policy-makers are often best placed – behind every successful drafter is a good network.
- Drafts will always reflect the brief given. A good drafter must be a good briefer.

### **Key messages are time bound**

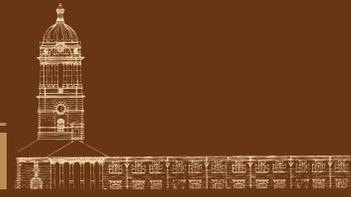
- Good communication is on time: a proactive step ahead or an instant response.
- Therefore, key messages must be available without delay.

### **3.5. Government's communication cycle**

In any democracy, government is elected by its people, and is therefore an institution for the people by the people. It is essential that ordinary citizens are constantly informed about government work and empowered to take active part in it. To ensure legitimacy and effectiveness, all government communication must have its origin and co-ordination from the highest office in the Government's structure.

Government should ensure integration of messages by strategising for communication. This will assist in working towards an ideal of a government speaking in one voice. The success of communication depends on the accurate diagnosis of the environment that will inform, among other things, the selection of appropriate messages, target audiences and media platforms.

## CHAPTER 3



### 3.5.1. Strategising process

- The communication cycle last from October/November up to March of the following year.
- Communication-strategy implementation lasts from April until March of the following year.
- This means that between October and March, the cycle will run concurrently with the implementation of the current communication strategy.

#### 3.5.1.1. Application of the communication cycle

- This cycle applies only to the national and provincial spheres of government. Local government has its own cycle in terms of the budget and planning.
- In implementing the communication cycle, communicators should bear in mind that there are communication activities being implemented at the local sphere of government and this might have a bearing on the implementation of their communication strategies.
- In implementing the communication strategies in line with the communication cycle, communicators should bear in mind the Government activities that are taking place through out the year (Women's Day, Youth Day, Freedom Day, Heritage Day, etc.)

### THE COMMUNICATION CYCLE

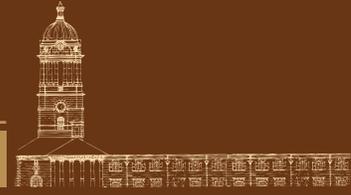
	Calendar month/s	Process	Process explanation
I <sup>st</sup> phase	October/ November	Pre-Cabinet Lekgotla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors-General (DGs) prepare for the January Cabinet Lekgotla.</li> <li>• DGs meet to look at the implementation plans in preparation for the January Lekgotla.</li> <li>• Based on the implementation plans from the DGs meeting, the HoCs will draft communication strategies.</li> <li>• Clusters and departments review the implementation of their communication strategies and submit their report to the GCIS for inputting into the January Lekgotla.</li> <li>• The GCIS will continue to provide advice to government communicators where necessary.</li> <li>• The last Government Communicators' Forum (GCF) of the year is held where the rest of government looks at how they implemented their programmes.</li> </ul>

## CHAPTER 3



2 <sup>nd</sup> phase	January	Cabinet Lekgotla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clusters begin to plan for post-SoNA briefing based on the outcomes of the Cabinet Lekgotla.</li> <li>• Plans approved by the Forum of South African Directors-General will be tabled at the Lekgotla for input and approval.</li> <li>• The Lekgotla agrees on the priorities for the year.</li> <li>• The GCIS to update the existing Government Communication Framework and table it at the January Cabinet Lekgotla. Presentation of DG cluster plans to the Cabinet Lekgotla.</li> <li>• The GCIS will emphasise the message that communicators should start working.</li> <li>• Departments will work on second draft communication strategies based on the outcomes of the Lekgotla.</li> <li>• The GCIS will continue to provide advice to government communicators where necessary.</li> </ul>
3 <sup>rd</sup> phase	February/ March	Opening of Parliament GCF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SoNA will cover the priorities and key themes and messages for the year.</li> <li>• Preparations for media briefings will reach the pinnacle and clusters will brief the media during which ministers will outline the PoA from the SoNA.</li> <li>• Key programmes are identified and strategic issues will be communicated as high impact programmes.</li> <li>• Further strengthening of communication strategies.</li> <li>• HoCs will go through the process to approve the communication strategies and submit them to the GCIS.</li> <li>• Upon receipt of the communication strategies, the GCIS issues a note to acknowledge receipt and advice if required.</li> <li>• The GCF is held where further guidance will be given to communicators and the communication approach is agreed upon.</li> <li>• The GCIS will continue providing advice to government communicators where necessary.</li> </ul>

## CHAPTER 3



4 <sup>th</sup> phase	April	Communication strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the communication strategies begins.</li> <li>• Continuous monitoring and evaluation as the implementation of the communication strategies unfolds.</li> <li>• All strategies should be approved with the budget before the financial year begins.</li> <li>• When implementing the communication programme, clear key messages should also be completed for every activity in consultation with the GCIS. This will assist with more integration and coordination and working towards the ideal of government speaking in one voice.</li> <li>• Departments and provinces should come up with a monitoring and evaluation mechanism.</li> <li>• The GCIS will continue to provide advice to government communicators where necessary.</li> </ul>
5 <sup>th</sup> phase	May, June, July, August	GCF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation continuous.</li> <li>• Departments will send their implementation/monitoring and evaluation reports to the GCIS ahead of the GCF held post the mid-year Cabinet Lekgotla.</li> <li>• This report will assist government to assess how far they are in terms of implementation and see if there are challenges to be dealt with.</li> <li>• The GCIS will provide advice to departments on the way forward.</li> <li>• The GCIS will continue providing advice to government communicators where necessary.</li> </ul>
6 <sup>th</sup> phase	September, October, November	Pre-Cabinet Lekgotla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation continuous.</li> <li>• Cluster departments and provinces review the implementation of their communication strategies and submit their reports to the GCIS for inputting into the January Lekgotla.</li> <li>• The GCIS will continue providing advice to government communicators where necessary.</li> </ul>
7 <sup>th</sup> phase	December	Government Communicators' Awards (GCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GCA is held to reward communicators who have excelled during the year.</li> </ul>



Enhancing government-wide communication

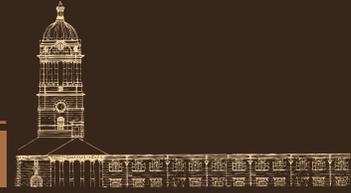
# CHAPTER 4

## ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT-WIDE COMMUNICATION



government communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT-WIDE COMMUNICATION

In 2007/08, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) initiated the Government-Wide Communication System Review as part of a 10-year evaluation of the system. The objective was to better understand communication challenges that still persisted and make recommendations on how best to address them.

Among the key issues identified in the report were:

- the need for comprehensive government communication policy guidelines (See Appendix 16.1) which, among other issues, emphasise the different aspects of communication, including outreach, stakeholder relationships and partnerships, media liaison, marketing, advertising and public relations
- where necessary, regulations enforcing policy decisions should be crafted to cover, among other things, specific requirements on advertising; guidelines for stakeholder engagement; guidelines on community engagement and consultation; participation by departments in government-wide communication projects, including *izimbizo* and media briefings; and guidelines and standards for media engagement
- the finding that communication is not prioritised across all government departments and spheres of government, and that budgets and resources are applied unevenly across departments.

The review also identified existing challenges that limit the effectiveness of government communication, which include:

- Political principals (ministers, members of the executive committees and/or heads of departments, directors-general [DGs] or chief executive officers) are not always aware of the requirements or impact of effective communication. This causes a gap in expectations and delivery.
- Communication is often seen as peripheral to departments. Capacity, budgets and skills in the communication components of most government departments are unevenly applied.
- There is no appropriate system of accountability in place to ensure that communication strategies are implemented and there is no standard assessment of the impact of communication.

Recommendations to address these challenges included that the GCIS should facilitate the development of a communication leadership programme to be included in the induction process of political principals and heads of departments – with participation in such a programme being compulsory.

The review also recommended that communication within the government-wide communication system be professionalised by introducing standard practices of communication through the institution of a performance-management tool (See Appendix 16.2), as well as by tailoring the qualification requirements for government communicators.



### 4.1. Performance Scorecard for government communicators

The review process showed a need for integration and further enhancement of the government-wide communication system. It also indicated that there were some difficulties in linking the heads of communication's (HoCs) expected deliverables to their scope of work. Given this, a generic scorecard has been developed to serve as a tool to assist DGs and HoCs in defining and determining departmental and provincial communication deliverables and standardising the performance requirements of HoCs.

The Generic Performance Scorecard has been developed to aid all HoCs based at national government departments and HoCs based in the offices of the respective premiers.

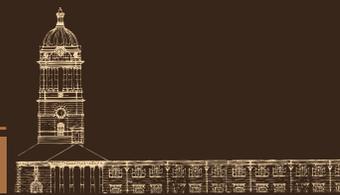
Due to its generic approach, it is necessary that each department or province adapts the Performance Scorecard to accommodate their particular context and circumstances – e.g. the communicators employed by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation need to liaise with foreign representatives of South Africa and to see to it that they have adequate information available as soon as possible. To enable this, resources need to be appropriately allocated with regard to the required information and budget and other contributing factors need to be sought to allow effective measurement of task execution. This will then form a key result area or KRA, which refers to a broad area of performance, for which an incumbent will be held responsible. It must relate to the organisation's overall mission, as well as to why the specific job exists. A KRA is defined as a future state of achievement that helps an organisation to succeed and create value.

The following reports were consulted in the drawing up of the generic scorecard:

- *Cabinet memoranda – 1998 and 2000*
- *National Communication Strategic Framework (NCSF)*
- *Comtask Report*
- *Review of Government-Wide Communication*
- *international benchmark studies*
- *The GCIS Strategic Plan*
- *SMS Chapter on Performance Management and Development System.*

The GCIS undertook this task, as it understands that:

- communication is a strategic element of democracy
- it is key in a participatory democracy that government effectively communicates with its citizens in a transparent and coherent manner
- all government communicators “speak with one voice”.



Effective government communication requires excellent coordination and integration of messages, campaigns and programmes. It also requires the effective implementation of the Government's Communication Strategy.

Strategy and planning are key elements for effective, integrated and coordinated government communication. The capacity to communicate with one voice is promoted by such practices as the Government Communicators' Forum and joint communication around programmes and campaigns undertaken collectively.

The GCIS has previously developed some tools (for example the *Government Communicators' Handbook*) to assist government communicators to understand their role as well as to introduce a "new approach to government communication that encourages integration, coordination and high levels of professionalism". However, the GCIS has recognised that greater integration and further enhancement in the delivery of its services can be realised through a process that monitors and measures performance. The identification of the need for a generic scorecard is seen to further enhance these types of initiatives by ensuring that a standard set of measurements, by which to hold HoCs equally accountable, is developed. The expected result of this is uniform accountability and better quality communication work from all HoCs. It will also address the perception of external stakeholders, as captured in the 10-year review document, that there is uneven performance across departments and spheres due to a lack of a uniform approach.

### **4.1.1. Context – GCIS and Senior Management System (SMS) Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)**

The context within which the Generic Performance Scorecard for all HoCs was developed was that of the government-wide communication system vis-à-vis the SMS PMDS. The development of a generic scorecard for HoCs formed part of the existing SMS PMDS and was therefore not intended as a reinvention of the wheel.

The elements of the existing system of performance management include:

- signed performance agreements
- an agreed format
- 80:20 KRAs (measurable output) and core management criteria (CMC)
- linkage between organisational and individual performance management
- a standardised rating scale
- a performance management cycle
- moderation processes
- financial rewards
- personal development plans
- poor performance and dispute-resolution mechanisms.



### **Described below are the key principles that underpin the SMS PMDS:**

- Departments are expected to manage performance in a consultative, supportive and non-discriminatory manner.
- Performance management should be linked to the organisation's strategic goals.
- An organisation implementing performance management is entitled to satisfactory work performance from all managers.
- All existing SMS members are expected to enter into a performance agreement within the first month of the new financial year. A newly appointed SMS member must enter into a performance agreement within the first three months of appointment.
- Performance management will be developmental (recognising outstanding performance) and transparent while maintaining administrative justice.
- SMS members must play an active role in developing their performance agreements.
- Performance agreements should be directly linked to the organisation's strategic/operational plan, and provide information in respect of the progress made over the evaluation period and changes required in respect of delivery focus.
- New performance agreements should indicate how results could be improved in the forthcoming performance cycle.
- Performance outcomes should form the basis for staff development and developmental plans.
- Supervisors must provide constant feedback to employees to enable them to find ways of continuously improving their output.
- Corrective measures should be timeously undertaken should performance fall short of acceptable levels.

Performance management in the Public Service is guided by the Public Service Act, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994), the Public Service Regulations, resolutions of the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC), Treasury Regulations and the *Batho Pele White Paper* and must be integrated with other systems and processes in the organisation.

The development of a generic scorecard for HoCs is therefore framed by these parameters and regulations.

#### **4.1.2. Roles and responsibilities in relation to the Generic Performance Scorecard**

##### **Departments'/provinces' role:**

- The Generic Performance Scorecard was developed as a tool for DGs to manage the performance of HoCs against a standard set of measurements as determined by the "experts".
- It forms part of the Performance Agreement to be signed by the DG and HoC and remains their functional responsibility.



### **HoCs' role:**

- HoCs must help define their accountabilities.
- They must perform in line with the provisions of the scorecard.
- They must report on and provide required evidence of performance.

### **The GCIS' role:**

- The GCIS' role remains that of providing strategic guidance and coordination between various departments, and ensuring that communication is coherent.
- In respect of the scorecard, the GCIS will provide a quality assurance or means of verification of performance role to DGs.

### **4.1.3. Content areas of the Generic Performance Scorecard**

The key functional areas of a government communicator, as outlined in the *Government Communicators' Handbook*, the NCSF and the *10-Year Review*, are:

- communication strategy development
- implementation plan development and actual implementation
- campaign management
- media relations
- management and use of various communication channels
- development communication
- internal communication
- management of unplanned and urgent communication.

#### **4.1.3.1. Key Result Area**

A KRA refers to a broad area of performance, for which an incumbent will be held responsible. It must relate to the organisation's overall mission, as well as to why the specific job exists.

The first step in developing KRAs is to identify the key responsibilities of a position and then the common themes. These must then be refined into realisable statements. KRAs should be SMART, i.e:

S – simple, clear and understandable

M – measurable in terms of quantity, quality, time or money

A – achievable and agreed on between the member and the supervisor

R – realistic, within the control of the member but still challenging

T – timely, assessable within the annual reporting cycle.

## CHAPTER 4



Key result areas	Weighting
Government/departmental communication planning, strategy development and implementation	xx
Implementation and management of campaigns	xx
Effective management and use of appropriate communication channels	xx
Building and sustaining a positive reputation of the department/province	xx
Effective management of “unplanned” and urgent communication	xx
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 4.1.3.2. Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

A KPI is one of the elements reflected in a performance scorecard and refers to tasks, projects or programmes to be undertaken by an employee for the performance year. KPIs are defined in respect of each KRA – and can be seen as measurable output thereof. Measures can be set in terms of time (by when), quantity (how much) and quality (improving rates of return, maximising investment and reducing cost). They must, as far as possible, be based on an end result and not effort. They must be within the control of the incumbent and must be objective and observable.

#### Quality requirements

Quality requirements provide detail around the standards or quality needed with regard to KPI delivery – i.e. what the KPI aims to achieve and against what standard performance it will be measured.

#### Weighting

The weighting refers to the score allocated to each KRA or KPI, which reflects its importance in relation to the other KRAs or KPIs on the individual scorecard. Total weightings must add up to 100%.

#### Target

A target refers to the standard to which a KPI must be achieved (reflected in terms of measures such as time, quality and quantity).

#### Evidence

This refers to the proof that the incumbent provides in support of achieving a KPI.

#### Means of verification

This column refers to the required KRA's sign-off or route of approval.

## CHAPTER 4



### **Enabling conditions**

These represent the systems, support, resources, etc. that must be in place to ensure that performance against target is possible and meaningful. Enabling conditions could also be defined as additional resource requirements, in other words, the resources needed to achieve a particular activity/objective/output. These may be in the form of people, equipment or finances.

The following tips should be considered in determining key resource requirements:

- It is important to provide a motivation for any additional resource requirements.
- It is critical to identify who is responsible for acquiring additional resources and ensuring that the “enabling conditions” are in place. This needs to form part of that relevant individual’s performance scorecard.
- The additional resource requirements and enabling conditions should be developed collaboratively between the employee and supervisor.

**See Appendix I 6.2**



# CHAPTER 5

## COORDINATING AND PLANNING STRUCTURES

Coordinating and planning structures



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### **COORDINATING AND PLANNING STRUCTURES**

Since its establishment, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) has put in place systems to coordinate and plan the communication work of government.

#### **5.1. Communication Planning Meeting**

This meeting takes place weekly to assist government to heighten communication by proactively planning and rapidly responding to issues in the environment. Its objectives are to:

- assist to plan for communication in government
- discuss weekly diaries and communication approaches for better and integrated communication
- contributes to the heightening of communication
- ensure integrated planning and response to communication challenges
- ensure better coordination of government's communication efforts
- assist the Government spokesperson to know key issues/activities that are taking place at departments in preparation for the post-Cabinet briefing and statement.

#### **5.2. Government Communicators' Forum (GCF)**

The GCF is a forum in which all government communicators from national and provincial spheres of government, including representatives from the South African Local Government Association (Salga), meet and strategise for communication. It provides a platform for communicators to plan and identify communication opportunities across the spheres and sectors of government through substantive discussions and joint planning to fulfil the Government's commitment to accelerate service delivery to ensure a better life for all. This forum is convened three times annually.

#### **5.3. Ministerial Liaison Officers' (MLO) Forum**

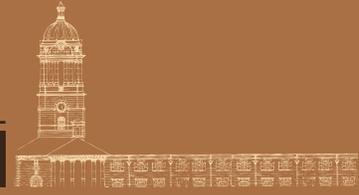
This forum assists in nurturing relations with the media and comes up with plans of action on how best to work in a more constructive manner. It convenes three times annually with the objectives to:

- build greater integration and coordination of government messages
- assist with the effective implementation of the National Communication Strategic Framework
- network and strengthen partnerships with both local and international media
- facilitate training for MLOs to ensure professionalism.

#### **5.4. Calendar of Events**

This initiative enables government communicators to share their plans for public activities and programmes. It assists them to take advantage of the opportunities created by other departments for bilateral work, to be more

## CHAPTER 5



sensitive to the environment within which information is released and approaches are taken, and to be more proactive in setting the Government agenda.

### **5.5. Induction of government communicators**

This tool enables the GCIS to introduce new government communicators into the communication system and to clarify the role of the GCIS and the range of services it provides to government departments to support their communication work.

### **5.6. Government Communicators' Awards (GCA)**

The GCA is a tool to motivate government communicators and to recognise improved delivery, innovation and excellence in the government communication profession. The GCA recognises those communicators who consistently strive for excellence and seek new ways of improving the effectiveness of government communication. Government communicators, individually or in groups from all three spheres, can enter or be nominated for the awards.

### **5.7. Bua Magazine**

*Bua Magazine* is an electronic magazine for government communicators. The magazine aims to encourage debates and promote continuous discussions around issues affecting government communication. It also aims to improve the flow of information among government communicators.

### **5.8. Communicators' Web (GCF Web Page)**

The Communicators' Web or GCF Web Page is an electronic information platform for government communicators that offers updated information affecting government communicators and contains important contact information. It enables them to access documents such as minutes, presentations, resolutions and other interesting material that relate to the GCF and relevant information associated with the profession.

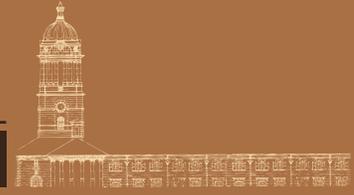
To access the GCF website go to: <https://www.gcis.gov.za/gcf>.

When you access the website you will get a message from your browser that "there is a problem with this website's security certificate". This is because the GCIS has its own security certificate, but the GCIS certificate can be trusted. Please follow the instructions on <http://www.gcis.gov.za/cert/> to accept the GCIS security certificate. After the security certificate has been accepted, you will no longer receive the message.

### **5.9. Communication clusters**

Clusters were formed in line with the former vision and mission of the GCIS: *To meet the communication and infor-*

## CHAPTER 5



*mation needs of government and the people, to ensure a better life for all and to provide leadership in government communication and ensure that the public is informed of government's implementation of its mandate.*

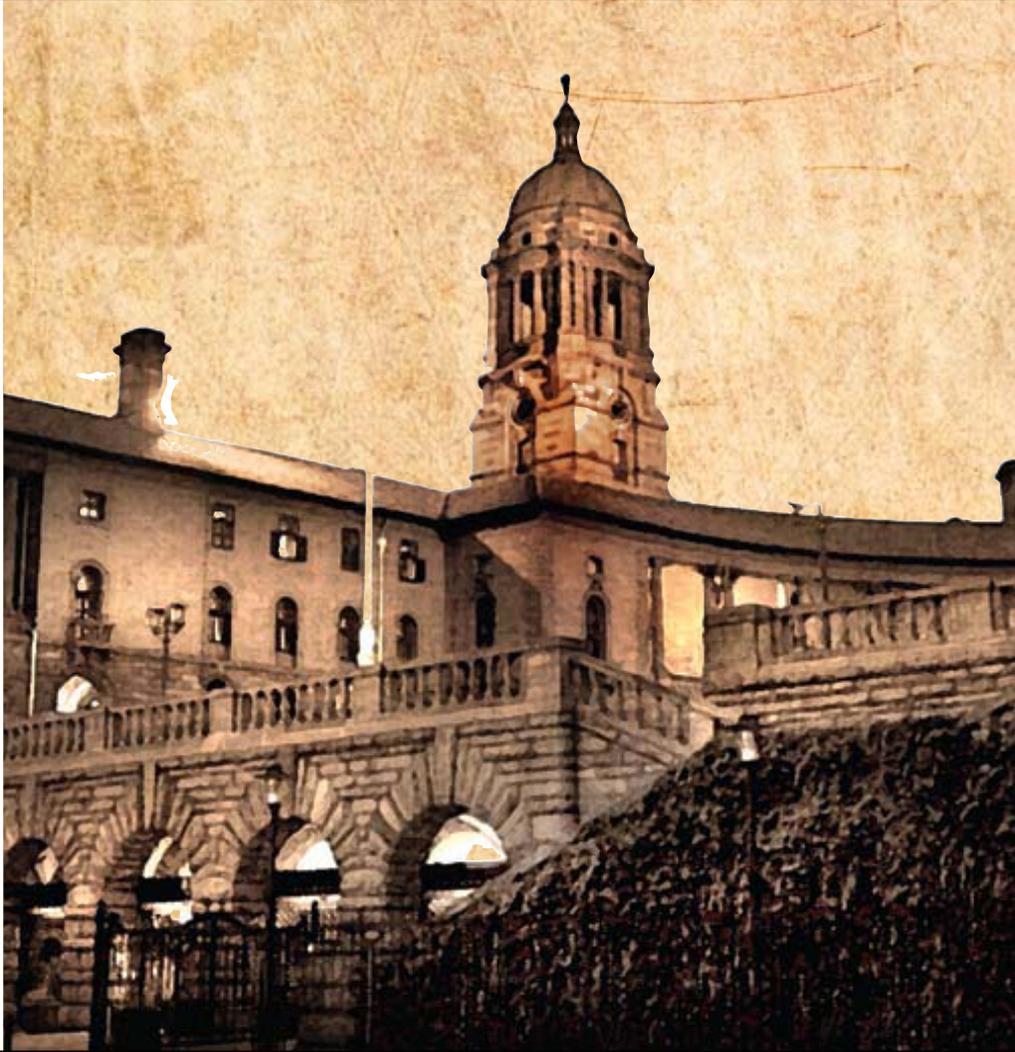
Government has moved towards integrated communication through the cluster approach. Given the strong similarities in departmental aims and objectives, it was critical to establish the system that will see integrated service-delivery efforts.

From the ministers and directors-general, it flows down to departmental heads of communication. At communication level, various departments come together to plan for communication around their programmes, which emerges from the intentions of rendering service to the people.

Communication clusters give meaning to the principle in the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of our country that guarantees freedom of expression, freedom of association and the right to access to information. This is founded on the understanding that without information there can be no popular participation, and without the latter there can be no lasting legitimacy. Through clusters' communication programmes, the objective of informing the people can be met.

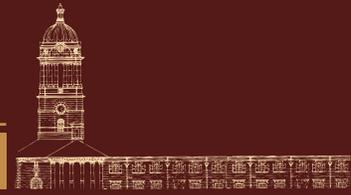
# CHAPTER 6

## COMMUNICATION RESEARCH



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Government communicators need to inform the public about government's policies and programmes to implement its mandate, including opportunities available to better their lives. In South Africa, the Government is using communication research to a growing extent. The effectiveness of government communication and the dissemination of government information can be enhanced through the application of appropriate scientific research processes and methodologies.

A former chief executive officer of the Government Communication and Information System (Joel Netshitenzhe) argues that: *In working out campaigns and programmes, there should be a deliberate effort to understand the communication environment, including target groups, appropriate media platforms, messages and forms of interaction. In this regard, communication research is a critical element of the trade: communication is an art form, but it should be based on science.*

Benefits for conducting communication research include the following:

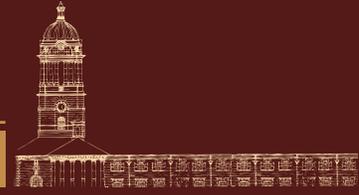
- helping to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of communication campaigns
- allowing for the needs of the target groups to be assessed
- assisting in the identification of appropriate messages and strategies to effectively communicate with the target audience
- evaluating the effectiveness of campaigns
- helping to meet accountability requirements
- assisting in the development of future campaigns through pre- and post-testing of campaigns and material.

### 6.1. Approaches to research

There are different ways to categorise the various ways in which communication research can be conducted – e.g. empirical- and desk research, personal and telephonic interviews, and interviewing individuals or groups. Most often though, researchers distinguish between quantitative and qualitative research.

#### 6.1.1. Quantitative research

Quantitative research involves the collection of data in a valid and reliable manner. Statistical procedures are used in the design, conduct and analysis of that research. Quantitative research is appropriate when we want to answer questions such as: How many? How much? How often? When? By whom? Questions like these require precise and quantifiable answers. Quantitative research can also be defined as research that aims to measure or put a number to a response. Quantitative research tends to emphasise relatively large-scale and representative sets of data. It is research that is indirect and abstract and treats experiences as similar, adding or multiplying them together, or quantifying them (Blaxter *et al*, 1996).



Quantitative data collection primarily involves conducting surveys and mostly uses face-to-face interviews, telephonic interviews, self-completion questionnaires or Web-based questionnaires.

### 6.1.2. Qualitative research

Qualitative research is often more challenging and time-consuming than quantitative research. It is concerned with collecting and analysing information in various forms, mainly non-numeric. Qualitative research also tends to focus on exploring, in as much detail as possible, smaller numbers of instances or examples that are seen as being interesting or illuminating, and aims to achieve “depth” rather than breadth (Blaxter *et al*, 1996).

“Qualitative” implies a direct concern with experience as it is “lived” or “felt” or “undergone”. Qualitative research aims at understanding experiences as nearly as possible as its participants feel it or live it (Blaxter *et al*, 1996).

Qualitative research aims at getting beneath the surface of verbal responses to explore the real dimension of a problem and the range of attitude to it. This type of information is particularly helpful to communicators and creative agencies as it allows for the development and evaluation of messages and products based on the target audience’s motivations. This is why qualitative research is usually recommended for pre- and post-testing communication campaigns or material.

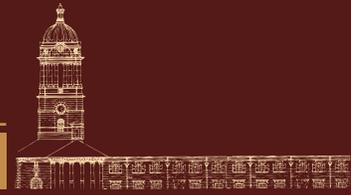
Qualitative researchers mostly use focus-group discussions and personal in-depth interviews for data collection.

### 6.2. Data analysis

It is important to understand the data after collection and capturing. Data analysis is an activity that permeates all stages of a study. Concern with analysis should begin during the design of a study, continue as detailed plans are made to collect data in different forms, and become the focus of attention after data is collected. Data analysis may not necessarily be completed only during the report writing, and data can be reviewed and analysed again and again depending on how one wants to utilise the findings.

Successful data analysis (quantitative or qualitative) requires understanding of a variety of data-analysis methods and different software packages that can be used for analysis (e.g. Excel, SPSS, Atlas ti, Nvivo). Data analysis needs to be planned early in a project. Researchers need to understand which methods will be best to attend to the aim and objectives of the research project. Researchers need to understand the questions posed to respondents and recognise how weaknesses in the data or the analysis can potentially affect the conclusions.

The dataset is often large (especially for quantitative research) and it is therefore not always easy to make connections between the various pieces of information. To make sense of the data, it is necessary to summarise it by



following a set of procedures (Struwig and Stead, 2001). Such procedures for data analysis may be classified in three dimensions as suggested by Bush (2005):

- *classification*: aggregating and organising data (e.g. through tables)
- *comparison*: comparing two or more datasets
- *interpretation*: using a conceptual framework to explain findings.

Analysis provides a basis for organising findings and for explaining its significance. When presenting findings, the main method is likely to be classification. This provides the basis for organising a complex dataset in a way that makes the meaning clear to the reader. There are different ways of analysing qualitative and quantitative data.

**Quantitative data analysis** is the process of presenting and interpreting numerical data. Quantitative data analysis often contains descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Different software packages could be useful in the analysis of quantitative data (e.g. SPSS, Excel, etc.) However, the use of such software needs knowledge and understanding of the software.

**Qualitative data analysis** is less precise (compared to quantitative data) because the data-collection process rarely provides an easy basis for straightforward comparison. Qualitative research relates to the personal (or “subjective”) experience of individuals and requires an approach to data analysis that acknowledges this emphasis. The main issue is to seek understanding of the way in which individuals create, modify and interpret the social world that they inhabit. It is concerned with meanings as much as with facts (Bush, 2005).

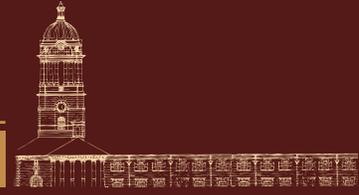
The emphasis on subjective views has implications for the mode of analysis to be adopted in dealing with qualitative data. Watling (2002) points out the problematic nature of findings based on people’s interpretation of events: *The qualitative research ... is likely to be searching for understanding, rather than knowledge; for interpretations rather than measurements; for values rather than facts; ... you move away from the analysis of given, measurable, and objectively verifiable facts, to analysis of thoughts, feelings, expressions and opinions which are open to debate (Watling 2002:267).* Qualitative data may be subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

### 6.3. Content analysis

The main purpose of content analysis is to apply quantitative techniques to qualitative data.

*The basic goal of content analysis is to take a verbal, non-quantitative document and transform it into quantitative data (Cohen and Manion 1994:55).*

*Content analysis involves certain key phrases or words being counted, and the frequencies analysed. The selection of these would depend on the hypothesis the researcher wished to prove or disprove (Easterby-Smith et al 1994:345).*



Content analysis typically involves frequency analysis but may also include identification of categories and units of analysis. These categories may be pre-coded or emerge from initial scrutiny of the data. Depending on the availability of skills and human resources, it is advisable to outsource data analysis.

### 6.4. Research tips

- Have a clear understanding of why you want to conduct research (referred to as the research aim).
- Make sure that you have clear and measurable objectives.
- Make sure that the deliverables and their format are clearly stated.
- Get good advice on the best research strategy/method to assist you to attain your objectives.
- Scan the market to determine the best possible price for your project.
- Conduct a background-check of the potential service-provider before appointment (previous research experience of clients).
- Check the experience of individual team members.
- Once the service has been outsourced, you must be involved in every step of the research process.
- Make sure that the service-provider and the research team are given a proper brief before the commencement of the project and throughout the course of the project cycle.
- Monitoring and quality assurance of field work (recruitment, transcripts, report, etc.) are important for the quality of the research output.
- Provide feedback to the service-provider throughout the research process.

### 6.5. Elements for research specifications/terms of reference

Before embarking on a research project, you need to develop the project specifications/terms of reference. The following are essential elements for research specifications:

- introduction/background
- main aim and objectives
- research design
- target market
- briefing and debriefing session
- profile of the research team
- data-collection instruments
- project plan
- time frames
- cost
- deliverables
- bid evaluation process (including evaluation criteria).

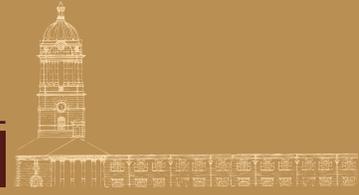
# CHAPTER 7

## CRISIS MANAGEMENT



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### CRISIS MANAGEMENT

#### 7.1. Handling a communication crisis

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

##### 7.1.1. Five steps to an effective crisis communication strategy

- **Create a crisis communication plan ahead of time**
  - Anticipate the crisis; think and talk about what might happen and how it can be effectively managed. Develop response strategies that can be implemented when a crisis occurs. Establish communication protocols.
  
- **Designate a crisis management team**
  - Determine and train spokespeople.
  - Address issues of empowerment and the chain of command.
  - Monitor and keep communication lines open between internal staff.
  
- **Manage the message and the media**
  - What is the issue? Define the nature of the crisis.
  - What is your message? Keep the message clear and consistent.
  - Anticipate and meet the needs of the media.
  
- **Communicate early and often**
  - Be proactive rather than reactive.
  - Decide on communication methods (press conference, in-person briefing, phone, fax, etc.). Release prepared statements and collateral material to the media.
  
- **Identify and prioritise key audiences and channels of communication**
  - Who are the audiences who matter most to your department?
  - Know what type of information each audience is seeking and keep them informed promptly; notify employees, key constituents, grantees, law-makers, etc.

**See Appendix 16.1**



# CHAPTER 8

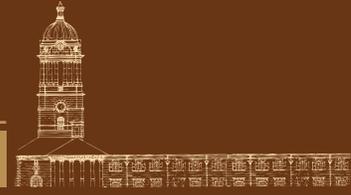
## DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

Dealing with the media



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

#### 8.1. Media perceptions audit of government communication

In 2005, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) commissioned research into the media perceptions of government communication to improve government's services to the media. The research consisted of 67 in-depth interviews with prominent journalists between August and October 2005. It was done by Kuper Research and the Media Observatory, a project of the University of the Witwatersrand's Journalism Programme.

Research revealed that although most senior journalists believed there had been improvements in government communication in recent years, they felt that still more advancement was needed.

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Avoid an adversarial relationship**

There needs to be an alignment of government communication and the media behind common objectives. A "them" and "us" mentality is counterproductive. The culture needs to be one of information-sharing, trust and respect.

#### **Understand the needs of the different media types**

Part of the professional standards required from government communicators is that they need to know the different platforms they can harness to deliver a message.

#### **Understand the importance of journalists' deadlines**

Be accommodating and assist in meeting the deadlines. Understand the immediacy of daily newspaper, radio and television news deadlines.

#### **Be accessible**

Government communicators have to be accessible to the media to share information and for them to meet their deadlines. Ministers and decision-makers should be more available to the media.

#### **Consistent professional standards**

Government communicators should consistently reflect professional standards in their work.

#### **Don't be "over-bureaucratized"**

Government communicators should try to "de-bureaucratize" the process through frequent and structured interactions between their principals and the media.



### **Government spokespersons are not bodyguards**

It is not the job of government communicators to protect their principals but to rather be their “voice”.

### **Media are not a “loudhailer/echo” for government**

Government communicators need to understand that the media are not loudhailers or there to echo government messages. They are also not “vultures waiting to disseminate negative news”.

### **Contact and recognition**

The media wants more contact and recognition at the senior level of government.

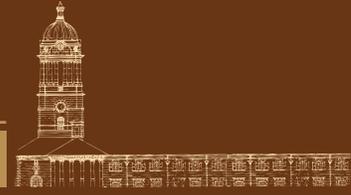
### **Truthful vs economical**

Government communication is not seen as untruthful but rather “economical” with the relevant information

### **8.2. What must a government communicator do?**

Government communicators can contribute to the building of healthy government-media relationships in the following ways:

- Know the policy positions of your department.
- Bear in mind that South Africa is a democracy. This means that the public’s access to government information through the mass media 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 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 broadcast and online media. This means that a radio journalist will be working on hourly or even half-hourly deadlines compared with the print journalist who may have a day or longer to write an article.



### **A journalist's nightmare**

What government communicators must **not** do:

- 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.

### **8.3. A guide to media and communication engagement**

#### **8.3.1. Questions that may be helpful when approached for a media interview:**

- Would it help the journalist if your department sent through some background material ahead of the interview?
- Can you call the journalist back in a few minutes? Buy yourself some time to collect your thoughts and review your tone and key messages.
- What is the preferred location for the interview – their studio, your offices or another venue?
- When do they want to do the interview? Preferably do a taped TV interview early in the day if intended for broadcast in the evening – that will leave more time for quality editing.
- How long will they need you for? This will help shape the depth of your messaging.
- Is it live, live-down-the-line (live remote, where you are in a different location to the actual interviewer) or recorded?
- Who will be the interviewer and how does that impact on the tone and direction of the interview?
- Will you be interviewed alone or with others, and who are the other participants? Will there be a studio audience?
- Do you want to be part of this mix – if the interview is refused, give a credible reason, offer to be interviewed another time, make it clear that “the refusal” is not government policy and suggest other issues that you’d be happy to comment on.

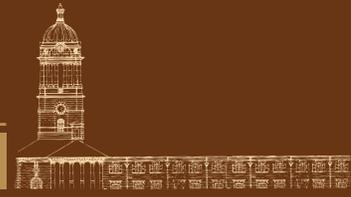


### 8.3.2. General interview principles

While the following practical pointers are presented as a set of media interview guidelines, the majority of the principles apply to any communication encounter – be it a media interview, community public participation, a presentation to a group of international investors or an informal conversation at a formal dinner. Please consider how the principle may be relevant to the context of your many different communication engagements.

#### PLEASE REMEMBER:

- You are always potentially “on record” – whether it be on camera or linked to a microphone, or if someone else is talking. This also applies to print interviews and stakeholder meetings.
- The interview lasts as long as a reporter is there. Maintain your interview mode until the conclusion of the engagement, not just during the formal interview process.
- Find out in advance who your audience will be, and structure the content and tone of your messages appropriately.
- Use terms and language understood by your audience. If you have to use technical jargon, ensure that you are able to define/explain the term succinctly and memorably.
- Project enthusiasm for your messages. This attitude is contagious. Enthusiasm – I am happy to be here. Concern – My subject is important to me and to you/the audience.
- Authority – I know what I’m talking about.
- Plan and prepare for the five worst questions you could be asked – questions that may not be related to the event you are attending or the issue you were invited to discuss.
- Role play repeatedly, anticipating the tough and/or frequent questions and current news issues.
- Get familiar with the publication/programme and the reporter’s style and approach before the interview. Besides giving you a clue as to how he/she will approach your subject, the fact that you are familiar with his/her work will help build rapport with him/her.
- Listen and hear the entire question from the interviewer/audience before answering.
- Seek clarification if the question is ambiguous or unclear, or restate the question (to your advantage) in your answer.
- Use the ABC approach – Answer the question, Bridge to your key messages and lay out the facts and Conclude by telling us what those facts mean.
- Use concrete facts wherever possible – even better, use word pictures or tell a memorable human interest story that illustrates issues such as service delivery and the positive difference that the Government makes in people’s lives.
- It’s your answers, rather than the questions, that are the most memorable (or in the case of print, the only) parts of the story.
- Talk through the interviewer to the audience – treat your host as you would an intelligent guest at a dinner party in your own home.
- Treat every question seriously – what may be funny to some people can damage your reputation once shared with a wider audience.
- Say the most important thing first, rather than first providing the rationale for the most important thing.



- Answer with positive statements and replace objectionable words used by the interviewer or audience member with more acceptable terms.
- Please avoid speculating on other public- or private-sector organisations – overt criticism of other players often can come back to haunt you as the media returns to focus on any gaps between what you say and what you do in your department.
- Mention the name of your department, rather than saying “we” or “us” – but use the name in moderation.
- Use modest hand movements only.
- Remain calm and polite with the interviewer – it is your role as spokesperson to make a friend, not an enemy, of the media.
- Look down as you consider a response, not up towards the sky, which can create an impression that your response is not authentic.
- Keep away from any alcohol – as a relaxant – before the interview. Also, avoid such things as cola drinks, chocolates and milk and milk products. It takes several hours to “uncoat” your throat from these products.
- Have a system for ensuring that the journalist/audience member receives everything they want after an interview or meeting and that all follow-ups are actioned by someone in your department.
- Be conscious of journalists’ news cycles and deadlines.
- If the reporter asks for information that is already a matter of public record, seriously consider making it available to the reporter. Withholding such information will only force the reporter to develop other sources and will undermine the relationship with the reporter.
- BE YOURSELF! When your responses in an interview sound as if they were written by a PR specialist, approved by your legal department, and then memorised verbatim, you lose your credibility.

### 8.3.3. Broadcast interview guidelines

Communication is received and interpreted by one’s audience on three levels: visual (body language), vocal (the tone of your voice) and verbal (the messages and words you use). Of these three levels, your verbal content is by far the least impactful with your audience, with typical audience recall levels for verbal content being as low as 7% to 15%, while the visual element can make up to 55% of your message.

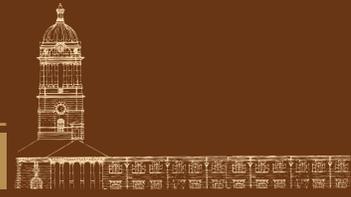
So, it makes sense to focus on a handful of core messages that you want your audience to remember, and to transition (bridge) to your core messages regardless of the question asked during a media interview.

Select two or three key messages targeted at your specific audience, taking into account that you should:

- Identify the issues that journalists and their readers/viewers/ listeners are interested in.
- Make your messages snappy and memorable – messages for broadcast media average between five and 20 seconds, and the average “soundbite” is nine seconds.

**PLEASE AVOID:**

- Speaking off the record, or not for attribution. The golden rule is that if you would not be comfortable seeing a comment on the front page of the newspaper tomorrow, then don't make the comment.
- Losing your composure and, for example, walking out on a TV interview – the world could see the re-runs of the incident in the traditional media and millions of times on social media such as YouTube.
- Speculating on an issue or being drawn beyond your specialisation area, or responding to hypothetical questions.
- Answering difficult questions with “no comment” – if you cannot give the interviewer an answer, say why you cannot, and then provide them with other information they could use. Most people interpret a “no comment” response as a signal that the interviewee has something to hide and that the allegation is true.
- Over-answering a question. Short answers are better than long. Keep your responses snappy. Don't use three words when one or two will do. Long responses are difficult to edit.
- Being afraid to admit that you don't know the answer to a question. Instead, offer to find the answer and get back to the reporter before the deadline.
- Trying to use government advertising pressure to influence editorial coverage or to hit back at a journalist or editor.
- Falling for the surprise last question or being misled by an apparent end to the interview e.g. the journalist closing her notebook or starting to chat about something else, giving the appearance that the interview is over.
- Responding to questions based on unfamiliar information presented as “facts” by the interviewer.
- Succumbing to the “pregnant pause” tactic where the interviewer allows you to answer a question and then withholds comment or a further question in the hope that you will be drawn into embellishing your response – the onus is on the interviewer to keep things flowing and fill dead air, so never keep talking to fill the vacuum.
- Dropping the endings of your words or let your voice trail off at the end of sentences – lost words are lost causes.
- Referring to notes other than for complex figures or quotations – use them openly, then put them aside. Never read your responses.
- Creating an editing challenge by referring to calendar days and terms such as “firstly” and “secondly” in a recorded interview for editing.
- Repeating the question verbatim if it contains a negative word or phrase.
- Feeling you have to answer every part of a multiple question – rather say something along the lines of: “You've raised a number of issues there. For us, the most important right now is ...” and address the one aspect of the multiple question you'd prefer to talk about.
- Asking the reporter if you can review the story before it's published. If the story is highly controversial, you may ask the reporter during the interview to read back your quotes to confirm accuracy.



- Make them positive – avoid using the word NOT in front of a negative term when discussing your department, as it is the negative term that will often stick in the audience’s mind and continue to be associated with the department. For example, avoid saying “We are NOT corrupt” (where the word “corrupt” is remembered – rather say something meaning the same thing but with positive phrasing, for example” “Our corporate governance standards are excellent”.
- Personalise and internalise your core messages, rather than memorising them.
- Avoid clichés and puffery.
- Back them up with facts, statistics and evidence.
- Emphasise messages based on benefits to the audience and the impact on their lives.
- Revise them on a regular basis, and consider publicising them internally to promote more consistent external messages.
- Remember that the more points you make, the more chance that the media will select the less important points for their story.

### 8.4. Message presentation strategies

#### **REMEMBER**

Government communication exists to ensure that the public is constantly informed about service delivery and the challenges facing government. 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 government messages are constructed in a way that would capture the public’s attention. A badly constructed message can be as bad as denying citizens their right to information.

#### 8.4.1. 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.

### 8.5. Other options to respond

Although the GCIS regularly arranges media briefings on behalf of clusters or departments, communicators are often required to respond to issues raised by the media or in response to requests by principals. Depending on the nature of the issue being addressed, communicators may have to decide on the best way to respond. Some of the options at the disposal of the communicator are:



### **8.5.1. Letters to the editor**

This could appear on the letters' page in the name of the political principal, senior official or the communicator. A stronger response can be achieved if the corrective information is put in the public domain in the name of a third party not seen to be in government. It is advisable that communicators cultivate contact with third-party endorsers who can be requested to respond to certain issues. There is generally a strong likelihood that such a letter will be published as the letters' page is a media institution recognised as the columns through which the public has its say on current affairs. Such letters do, however, have to conform to laws governing libel, defamation, etc. before being considered for publication.

### **8.5.2. Opinion-editorial (op-ed) pieces**

An op-ed piece is perhaps the strongest response a communicator can use in correcting inaccurate reporting. As the name implies, the content of such a piece is a combination of both opinion and editorial and does not conform to the conventions of the "objective hard news" report. Space in newspapers for such pieces cannot be booked and involves negotiations with editors.

Editors subject such pieces to a number of tests to decide whether they are worth publishing, including the test of newsworthiness. The op-ed allows a communicator to develop a reasoned response to an issue or a new development to explain it to the public more clearly. Although some of the suggestions in this section of the handbook are based on a reactive response to messages in the public domain, the op-ed allows government to be proactive in placing new issues on the media agenda before they enter the communication environment.

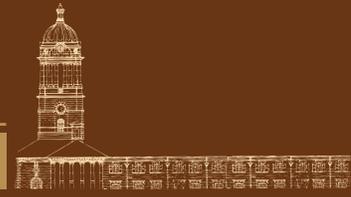
Communicators can invoke a media convention known as the "right to reply" to ensure publication of such a piece. On the other hand, if media made unsuccessful attempts to elicit government response because of a slowness to respond to media queries or evasiveness on the part of the communicator, the likelihood of such a piece being placed diminishes.

### **8.5.3. Paid media coverage**

Government departments should not pay the media for any form of editorial coverage. We should achieve reputation-enhancing, earned media coverage through the newsworthiness of activities and announcements.

### **8.5.4. Advertisements**

Often used by government to respond to issues or to bring new issues to the public domain, this is the weakest tool at the disposal of the communicator because of the high cost of advertising in both broadcast and print media. Secondly, the credibility of information in an advert is often treated with scepticism by the public. Finally, it indicates that the communicator was not successful in packaging the information in a manner newsworthy enough to attract the attention of a journalist. Although a weak option, there are times when communication in the form of adverts



can be used, but this should be seen as necessary only when required as part of a broader communication strategy or a last resort.

### 8.5.5. Advertorials

Like an advertisement, an advertorial (advertisement + editorial = advertorial) is a paid-for media space. The difference, however, is that it appears to the reader as news copy, although branded as “advertorial”. Although creating the effect of greater credibility, advertorials still carry a high cost factor and, where they are detected, an image of low credibility.

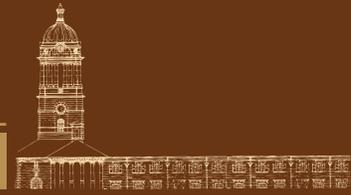
While the above represent some of the tools in the communicator’s toolbox, one of the most effective ways of dealing with the media is through direct contact.

### 8.5.6. Direct contact

- **One-on-one briefings with journalists:** These often arise as a result of requests from the media, but can be effectively used for proactive communication. As the media is driven by the psychology of the scoop or the exclusive story, this can be very effective in certain issues, particularly where communicators have strong relationships with individual journalists covering their beat. This can also work well where a particular journalist has been consistently incorrect or off-message on an issue.
- **Beat briefings:** Although government is generally covered by political journalists, it might often be required that certain beat journalists be targeted for special briefings. These could be from health, transport, finance, agriculture, etc. Such briefings are important as these specialist journalists have a finer (and sometimes more troublesome) understanding of a particular area. Keeping them constantly aware of developments on their beats is vital to government.
- **General briefings:** The GCIS frequently arranges media briefings on specific issues and some that affect government in general. Departments and clusters also conduct briefings from time to time and these have had the effect of reducing uninformed speculative reporting around some issues as pertinent information has been placed on record for the media.
- **Parliamentary Press Gallery Association (PGA) briefings:** The PGA comprises reporters whose dedicated beat is Parliament. Located in Cape Town, briefings with the PGA are regularly organised by the GCIS. The most frequent briefings with the PGA take place following Cabinet meetings, during the parliamentary media briefing weeks following the Opening of Parliament and cluster media briefings.



- **Lock-up briefings:** Most frequently conducted by the National Treasury, the lock-up briefing is based on the idea that complex information requires assistance from the media with interpretation. The release of statistics or complex results of studies might require a lock-up style briefing during which principals explain the information and field questions on information presented to manage the manner in which it enters the public domain. Usually, information presented during such a lock-up is embargoed until the end of the lock-up. The GCIS can assist line-function departments in the protocols required for such a briefing.
- **Foreign Correspondents' Association (FCA) briefings:** Some foreign correspondents based in South Africa are members of the FCA. Through the analysis of stories in international media and requests from the FCA, the GCIS regularly arranges media briefings for FCA members and line-function departments. Because not all foreign reporters are members of the FCA, the GCIS maintains a database of foreign reporters in South Africa to facilitate contact with all foreign media working in South Africa.
- **Formats for briefings:** Briefings of the kind described above can take many formats. Communicators need to decide on the format in consultation with the principals leading a briefing prior to its commencement. The chair of a briefing should then announce the format before the briefing begins. The formats are:
  - **On-the-record briefings:** As the term suggests, all information at such briefings is for broadcast, is printable and is attributable. In other words, the person(s) leading the briefing can be quoted by name by the media in attendance and all the information is considered a matter of public record. Although this might be obvious, it needs to be clarified at the start that such a briefing is on the record and attributable by name and designation to the principal(s) conducting it. This format need not be announced in advisories to the media as it is generally assumed that briefings are on record.
  - **On-the-record, but not for attribution:** This is a trickier briefing to conduct and manage. The media needs to be given a clear indication that the information being discussed can be used in coverage, but the source cannot be named. A clear indication needs to be made on whether the source can be referred to as “a senior government official” (i.e. anonymously) or not at all. These are sometimes referred to as “background briefings” and the format and terms of the briefing must be announced both in the advisory (as a background briefing) and at the briefing itself.
  - **Off-the-record and not for attribution:** As the term suggests, this is intended to be a background briefing for the information of the media. The material can neither be used, nor can any reference be made to the source by name, by designation or anonymously. The format and terms of such a briefing must be made clear, both in the advisory and prior to the start of a briefing. These are sometimes called “deep background briefings”. The advisory sent to media can describe it as a “deep background briefing”, but might want to omit the name of the principal conducting the briefing. Such briefings require high levels of trust and are best done on a one-on-one basis.



- **On-the-record and for anonymous attribution:** It is often necessary to prepare the communication environment for certain important developments. In such instances, it might be useful to brief the media on record but not have a principal quoted by name. The media should be given an indication of whether the source of the information can be described in general terms or more specifically within the idea of anonymous attribution. For example, would the attribution “senior official in the Department of Tourism” or “a representative from the Ministry of Health”, speaking on condition of anonymity lends more credence to a particular story than “government official” or “senior ministerial official”?

The statement “speaking on condition of anonymity” is usually associated with negative or leaked information and communicators must ensure that such briefings do not lend themselves to such a description of principals. This format needs to be announced at the briefing and should not form part of the advisory.

As the above formats make clear, there are some rules of engagement with the media that make the task of communicators a little clearer. One of the most frequently made errors in briefings is the failure to announce the format of a briefing before it begins.

This confuses the media and sometimes leads to the unintended publication of sensitive information. It is therefore vital that formats are announced, both where necessary in the advisory and prior to the commencement of a briefing. Another frequently made error is the tendency to move between on-the-record and off-the-record formats. Briefings should be consistent with the stated format constructed in such a manner that principals are clear, within the timeframe of a single briefing, on where on-the-record ends and off-the record begins. Erratic skipping between the two increases the likelihood of damaging communication appearing in the public domain and the consequent erosion of trust between government and the media.

As a rule, some principals do not make off-the-record statements that are not defensible in an on-the-record context. Others, who have strong relations of trust with the media, comfortably impart information in an off-the-record, not-for-attribution context. It is the task of communicators to establish the preference of their principals and the specifics of the content on which media are to be briefed.



# CHAPTER 9

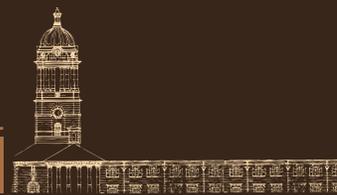
## PUBLICATIONS

Publications



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### PUBLICATIONS

#### 9.1. Official publications deposit and publication reference numbers

The Government Printing Works (GPW) provides a printing service to national government departments and provincial administrations. The GPW also plays a role in allocating the following identification numbers on the published official publications:

- ISBN (International Standard Book Number)
- RP (national departments' annual reports' number)
- PR (provincial departments' annual reports' number).

The GPW obtains a group of ISBNs from the National Library of South Africa for allocation to newly published publications during the year. RP and PR numbers are required by the Auditor-General's office for reference purposes and are allocated to the national and provincial departments' annual reports by the GPW.

Heads of communication (HoCs) are responsible for ensuring that official departmental publications comply with the requirements of the Official Publications Deposit, and that the appropriate identification numbers such as ISBN, RP and PR are allocated to official publications.

#### 9.2. Publication strategy

All departmental marketing publications – brochures, newsletters, reports, magazines, newspapers – must be based on the marketing strategy approved by the HoC.

Departments should only produce publications if there is a legitimate public benefit in doing so, or if the public requires specific information that is best communicated through a publication.

#### TO NOTE:

- The procurement and appointment of external service-providers used in the production of publications must be in accordance with government procurement processes.
- All publications must conform to departmental corporate identity standards.
- Publications must be printed with due regard for the language preferences of the intended audience, and according to plain language requirements.
- The size and style of typefaces and other design elements used in the publication must serve to promote effective readability.
- Publications must not bring the department into disrepute by virtue of their content, whether it is the quality of the written content or the quality of any photographic images or other graphic material.
- It is the responsibility of the HoC to ensure that publications produced by the department respect the relevant copyright and privacy requirements.



### 9.3. Publication on the Internet

Publications produced by the department should be made available on the department's Internet site in PDF format unless the HoC determines not to publish it on the website because of the:

- high publication costs relative to the benefit of electronic accessibility
- high publication complexity
- low suitability for web delivery.

### 9.4. Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) publications

#### 9.4.1. BuaNews

BuaNews is an online government news service that provides the latest information on government-related activities with specific focus on the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA).

##### 9.4.1.1. Benefits for communicators

Given the appreciation of the quality of BuaNews stories, communicators tend to benefit by having their activities covered and known by all communities.

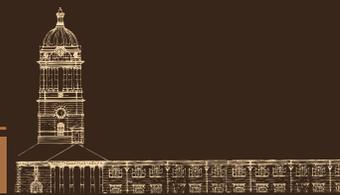
- BuaNews stories are covered in community, mainstream and international media.
- Internet website utility of BuaNews locally and internationally is very high, with most sites locally recognising and using BuaNews articles, including linking to the BuaNews website.
- Increased international utility has been enhanced via strategic news agreements with partners such as Xinhua news agency, IRNA (Iran), SANA (Syria); Prensa Latina (Cuba); United Press International (Washington); Tanjug (Serbia) and the Nam News Network (Malaysia).
- Apart from media pick-up, pick-up by publishers such as Maskew Miller Longman and Lingua Franca has increased with BuaNews articles published in high school textbooks. There is an appreciation from this sector for the simple language BuaNews uses, accuracy of information, topics explored and quality of content.
- The number of visits to the online website increased from 500 hits in July 2005 to approximately 500 000 hits by December 2009.

Government communicators in all three spheres can send statements, speeches, advisories, alerts and releases to [newsfiles@gcis.gov.za](mailto:newsfiles@gcis.gov.za) to ensure that these are picked up by BuaNews journalists.

Visit the BuaNews website at [www.buanews.gov.za](http://www.buanews.gov.za) or contact 012 314 2449.

#### 9.4.2. Vuk'uzenzele

Vuk'uzenzele is a free government magazine published six times a year by the GCIS. It is a multilingual magazine launched in September 2005 and since then more than 20 editions totalling 28 million copies have been produced



and distributed countrywide. The core function of *Vuk'uzenzele* is to meet the need for public information about socio-economic opportunities, especially among those with less access to mainstream media, as well as creating awareness of government programmes in general.

Even though the magazine is intended to meet the information needs of all South Africans, the core target market for the magazine is LSM 1 – 5. The magazine boasts a circulation of 1,6 million for the five editions produced in May, July, September, November and January each year and with one edition with a print run of two million. The five editions consist of 32 pages while the one edition that comes out in March consists of 48 pages as it incorporates the State of the Nation Address and highlights of the PoA.

### 9.4.2.1. Benefits to communicators

- It is multilingual.
- It reaches those corners of the country that normal advertising doesn't reach.
- The magazine is distributed in all nine provinces covering the rural, deep rural and peri-urban areas where the majority of the recipients fall within the LSM 1 – 5 group.
- It provides public education on issues of government communication campaigns. The magazine carries regular pages that include health issues, credit, crime, fun and letters page, role-model features, etc.
- It is reaching a huge sector of South Africa's people – mainly the poor – largely ignored by mainstream media. Feedback and research show that it is keenly read and deeply appreciated.
- It is a platform that integrates government's various messages directed at especially the poorer sections of our society.
- By so doing, it extends the reach of each department.

Clearly, it can make a significant difference to the work of government communicators. *Vuk'uzenzele* needs your input as it is the only magazine that can extend the reach of your communication.

### 9.4.2.2. Contributions

Your contributions can be in the form of paid-for advertisements (we pay particular attention to making sure that adverts are well designed and written for the readers of *Vuk'uzenzele*) and information for articles by our journalists (who are trained to write in a style that our readers like).

### 9.4.2.3. Recognising stakeholder needs

*Vuk'uzenzele* is also available in Braille and online. The online version can be accessed at [www.info.gov.za/vukuzenzele](http://www.info.gov.za/vukuzenzele).

The magazine dedicates five pages to advertisers from both the public and private sector to profile their products and services at a market-related rate (prices are negotiable). You are also welcome to sign up for the advertise-



ment placement for a year. *Vuk'uzenzele* has been registered with the Audit Bureau of Circulations of South Africa (ABC) since June 2007.

*Vuk'uzenzele* is a platform to communicate government's programmes through articles of which the departments will be acknowledged via byline and through paid advertisement placement.

Your contribution can be forwarded to the Chief Director: *Vuk'uzenzele*, Rafiq Rohan, at 012 314 2159 or [rafiq@gcis.gov.za](mailto:rafiq@gcis.gov.za) and the Director: *Vuk'uzenzele*, Dorris Simpson, at 012 314 2826 or [dorris@gcis.gov.za](mailto:dorris@gcis.gov.za).

*Vuk'uzenzele* – Let's make it happen.

### **9.4.3. South Africa Yearbook**

The *South Africa Yearbook* is updated annually by the GCIS to provide a comprehensive account of programmes and policies of the South African Government and serves as the official reference on the work of government departments over a given period of time.

It also captures highlights in the history and evolution of our country and showcases the achievements of South Africa and its people.

The *South Africa Yearbook* is a useful information resource for government communicators, researchers, public relations specialists, business, tourism, journalists, marketers, visitors, educators, learners and the general public of South Africa.

Given its wide reach, and its objective to serve as the official record of the work of government, it is imperative for government communicators to play an active role in updating and enriching the content of the *South Africa Yearbook*.

Each year, government communicators across all departments are given an opportunity to revise the content of the section/s of the publication that applies to their respective departments.

The GCIS prints 45 000 copies annually around the end of the financial year. It is distributed to schools and other educational institutions across South Africa at no cost. Copies of the *South Africa Yearbook* are also distributed internationally to embassies and missions across the world. Free copies can be obtained from the GCIS, provided that they are not used for retail purposes and also pending stock availability.

## CHAPTER 9



To obtain a copy of the *South Africa Yearbook 2009/10*, *Pocket Guide to South Africa 2009/10* or CD-Rom, or for more information, kindly contact the Editor, Delien Burger, tel: 012 314 2410 or [delien@gcis.gov.za](mailto:delien@gcis.gov.za).



# CHAPTER 10

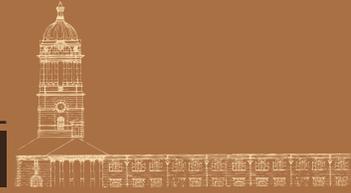
## DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

Development  
communication



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### 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 fulfilment of the human potential.” – Nora Quebral; *Quoted in Development Communication – Rhetoric and Reality* by Pete Habermann and Guy de Fontagalland.

Access to information, open dialogue, openness and accountability and media freedom are all fundamental tenets of a thriving democracy. To achieve these, government should maintain continued interaction with all stakeholders and require that political principals take on the role of chief communicators within their portfolios.

This is particularly relevant within the context of developmental communication, which focuses on meeting the communication needs of the people in a manner that is accessible to them and which will result in a qualitative difference to their lives.

The development-communication approach is aimed at making public programmes and policies real, meaningful and sustainable. Information should be applied as part of community development efforts and should address information needs identified by communities, including various structures and groups within communities. Most importantly, the information should take into consideration the diversity of culture and language and different literacy levels. The intended outcome is to make a difference in the quality of life of individuals and communities.

#### 10.1. Characteristics of a development-communication approach

##### **It is responsive**

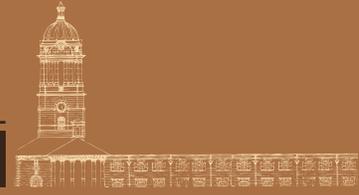
This means that communication between government and the community must be responsive to the needs of the community within the context of government’s mandated programme to improve the lives of all South Africans.

##### **It relies on feedback**

It is a two-way communication process that involves consultation with the recipients of information and provides them with answers to their queries. This process similarly gives government an opportunity to listen to the ideas and experiences of communities, especially about programmes and services aimed at improving their lives.

##### **It must be creative and innovative**

The message must clearly show how information can better the lives of recipients. The message must promote hope and trust among its recipients, as well as encourage them to be interested in its content and to become a part thereof.



### **It is about continuity and sustainability**

It is not about government dumping communication material on communities and not making sure that they understand its content. Follow-up workshops can be arranged to emphasise the importance and necessity of the information. The community must therefore use it continually and in a sustained way to enrich their lives. It must be available continuously when there is a need.

### **10.2. Examples of the development-communication approach**

#### **10.2.1. Thusong service centres**

The Thusong Service Centre (formerly known as multipurpose community centres) programme of government was initiated in 1999 as one of the primary vehicles for the implementation of development communication and information, and to integrate government services into primarily rural communities. This was done to address historical, social and economic factors, which limited access to information, services and participation by citizens, as they had to travel long distances to access these services.

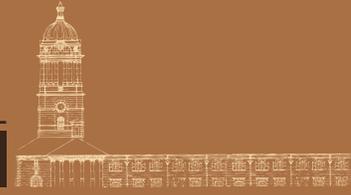
Thusong service centres are **one-stop, integrated community development centres** with community participation and services relevant to people's needs. They aim to empower the poor and disadvantaged through access to information, services and resources from government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), parastatals, business, etc. enabling them to engage in government programmes for the improvement of their lives.

Government's vision for Thusong service centres is to provide every South African citizen with access to information and services within their place of residence and in each local municipality by 2014 with the purpose of improving the quality of their lives through integrated service delivery.

By the end of February 2010, 140 Thusong service centres were in operation, making a crucial contribution to the expansion of infrastructure for access to information and services that citizens can use. Typical services found at these centres include those from the departments of home affairs, labour, social development and health; the South African Social Security Agency; the GCIS; telecentres; the Post Office; libraries; agricultural extension offices; and municipal services. Community development workers, the South African Police Service, NGOs and community-based organisations also offer services through the centres.

Communities get services which they were unable to obtain in the past, and participate in activities that allow for two-way communication between the Government and the people. A Thusong service centre is also a base from where information products and services are sent to all parts of the district.

## CHAPTER 10



Similarly, Thusong service centres link communities to the Government's distribution network of publications and products about government programmes and activities. Community participation events, campaigns, exhibition and road shows at Thusong service centres provide communities with information they can use to improve their lives and develop the community.

Some specific benefits to communities include the following:

- local economic development
- integrated service delivery in line with the requirements of the Municipal System Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000)
- improvement in infrastructural development
- education and skills development, Adult Basic Education and Training and government programmes
- access to information and services closer to where people live
- access to technology: telecentres provide access to the *Batho Pele* Gateway and computer training
- platform for partnerships, which empower communities through, for example, sustainable projects that encourage ownership and self-employment, as well as employment of others.

### **10.2.2. Public participation**

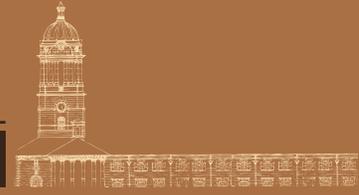
Since Cabinet's decision in October 2000 to introduce public participation (*izimbizo*) as a method of interactive governance and unmediated communication, the platform has enabled government to better understand people's needs and how these needs can best be met. In essence, the Public Participation Programme is a unique form of participatory democracy.

This interactive programme promotes people's direct access to and interaction with the President, ministers, premiers, MECs, mayors and local councillors. It is an important platform for mobilising all sectors of society to partner with government to speed up change and accelerate service delivery.

Public participation events therefore provide an opportunity for political leaders in all three spheres to intensify interactive communication around the Programme of Action (PoA) and other government activities.

### **10.2.1. Strategising for public participation communication**

A public participation communication programme has to be based on a defined communication strategy. The strategy must clearly outline the objectives of undertaking public participation and must contain all the elements of the communication strategy as outlined in the generic framework for developing a government communication strategy. The communication strategy must also be accompanied by a phased action plan to facilitate monitoring of the implementation of the communication strategy.



### 10.2.2.2. Planning of public participation events

Effective planning is a critical aspect of any successful campaign. This embodies initial conceptualisation of how the Public Participation Programme will take place, using the communication strategy as a guide. At this stage, role players must be identified and the necessary steps and processes specified in a work breakdown structure and action plan. Based on the information received, the GCIS strategically deploys available political principals to events. The various departments also submit their programmes through the database developed and maintained by the GCIS.

A national task team was established with the overall responsibility of coordinating and overseeing the implementation of the Public Participation Programme. This team consists of members of the GCIS, The Presidency, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, other national departments and provincial heads of communication.

The national task team's responsibilities include:

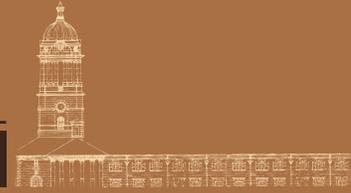
- Programme consolidation with officials responsible for provinces and the officials responsible for national departments.
- Marketing and distribution.
- Media liaison with two media liaison officials. One is responsible for mobilising media at national level and should liaise with the other official mobilising media at local level (community media).
- Overseeing the provincial public participation coordinating team.
- Capturing programmes/events onto the database (but this does not take away departments' and provinces' responsibility to factor their programmes onto the database).
- Developing a public participation poster that will be sent to provinces to translate according to their own language needs and mass production and distribution.
- Developing radio and television advertisements.
- Media monitoring and analysis.

The provincial coordinating task team's responsibilities include:

- setting up the provincial public participation task team
- drafting public participation programmes and factoring them into the database and/or submitting them to the GCIS
- liaising with the offices of the ministers regarding the deployment of political principals (ministers/deputy ministers)
- submitting post-public participation reports to the National Task Team (GCIS).

The budget is another crucial aspect of a public participation programme's implementation. Sometimes, budget commitments will be shared between the national department and the province. When this is the case, it must be

## CHAPTER 10



made clear which aspects of the budget are the responsibilities of the province and which of the national Government. At times, this is left hanging and often results in unnecessary debts and unhealthy relations.

Media liaison is critical to popularise public participation to relate to people the commitment government has in uniting with the people to achieve change.

A media liaison manager must be identified. Too many people managing media liaison activities often result in confusion and negative coverage of the public participation event. The media liaison manager and team will then be responsible for developing and implementing an effective media liaison strategy and plan that should entail, among other things:

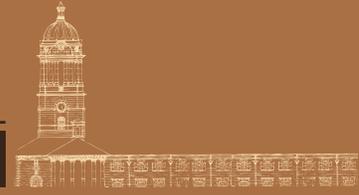
- media briefings
- interviews
- media to be targeted
- opinion pieces
- key messages about public participation
- contents of the media kit.

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

During some public participation programmes, 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 public participation programmes is to provide the facilities necessary for the media to do their work effectively. This may be an Internet café where the media can file their stories. A briefing room could also be handy when the need arises to give further briefings to the media.

To reinforce the message, publicity material has to be developed, availed and widely distributed. Such material must relate to government's programmes, reflecting on successes and challenges of service delivery. To achieve maximum impact, common publicity material is used, including posters, pamphlets and leaflets. Media statements, interviews and publicity material can be complemented by any promotional material.

Departments and provinces can produce other material of their own, as long as the central message of government is integrated.



### 10.2.2.3. Conducting research for public participation programmes

**Preliminary research:** Research must be conducted on the area where the Public Participation Programme is scheduled to happen. This could either be a province, 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
- people gaining access to water and healthcare
- number of telephone lines installed
- matriculation results
- educator: learner ratio.

To show a trend in terms of service delivery, it is advisable for statistics to reflect delivery from 1994 up to the most recent and verified reports. This can in turn be used for publicity material for public participation programmes. In terms of qualitative data, consideration must be given to developmental issues in the specified area, languages spoken, natural resources and the communication milieu.

**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 programmes in the given area.

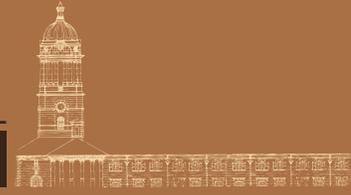
- Information received from departments has to be verified by independent research, which may involve field visits or contacting people involved in the programmes, etc.
- In processing the research, consideration must be given to both the output and impact of service delivery.
- Research briefings must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

### Assessment and follow-up research

This is crucial for an effective public participation programme, 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 language spoken in the area where the event takes place.
- Ideally, scribes should come from the communication sections in provinces, because they are more aware of the communication environment in which they will be documenting issues raised.
- A user-friendly form needs to be compiled by the researcher for each scribe to complete when documenting issues raised by the people.

## CHAPTER 10



- All scribe notes need to be collected and collated into a follow-up report comprising all issues raised. Ideally, this should be in the form of a database, or in a tabular form, which captures all the fields of the scribe's form.
- A fortnight after the public participation activity, it may be necessary to visit the province to obtain reportback, as well as discuss the development of a consolidated report.
- The consolidated report, which will also include time frames of action required by responsible departments and bodies, should be presented to the relevant principal.
- 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 public participation event.

### **10.2.2.4. During public participation events**

During the event, the task team must take care of several critical issues.

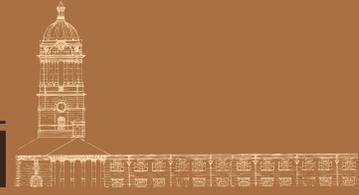
#### **Recording proceedings**

The task team has to allocate people who will be in charge of recording and documenting the issues raised by people, and the responses given by government officials. The task team must therefore ensure that there is an operational public address (PA) system and roving microphones. Given the mobile nature of these sessions, it would be advisable to outsource the PA system from venue to venue. The GCIS' broadcast production unit may be requested to record those events that have a development-communication element. These requests need to be made within a reasonable time frame as the GCIS provides its services pending the availability of resources at the time.

#### **Monitoring the programme**

The task team should allocate members to all the venues where the public participation activities will be taking place to ensure that things are efficiently organised. Any problems should be reported immediately to the project leader for alternative arrangements, if necessary. Adherence to the time allocated to the programme is crucial. It is critical to advise people beforehand about the actual venues to avoid situations where people wait for the principal in venues that are not part of the itinerary.

However, the provincial project leader should be dynamic and flexible to deal with unforeseen circumstances. The heads of protocol and security should be briefed continuously to inform them when the programme has to take a slight or drastic change. If public participation is happening over a few days, the task team should meet at the end of each day's programme to assess the proceedings and plan for the next day.



### **Post-public participation tasks**

The task team does not disband immediately after the last item on the programme of the public participation event. There are issues to be dealt with after the public participation programme, e.g. ensuring that issues raised are sent to the responsible departments.

#### **10.2.2.5. Evaluation of the Public Participation Programme**

The task team needs to evaluate the Public Participation Programme and critique where necessary for future improvements. The evaluation should be the first step towards writing a report about the programme.

### **Public participation report**

The task team has to produce a report about the Public Participation Programme, which is submitted to management. The report should contain recommendations about how issues raised will be taken forward.

### **Follow-up**

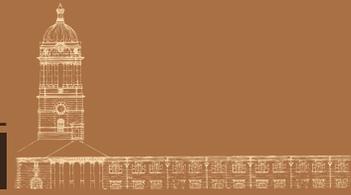
The task team should also set up a process through which issues that were raised during the public participation activity will be followed up. This may entail consulting relevant government structures that may not have been at the public participation activity but are the competent structures to respond to issues raised. Formal contacts need to be made with those structures through the political head or appropriate official.

### **10.3. Guidelines for effective scribing during a public participation programmes**

A crucial determinant of the success of a public participation programme is effective follow-up and resolution of issues and concerns raised during an event, as it will ultimately be measured by its follow-up in terms of action taken. Outlined below are some guidelines, which serve as pointers for effective capturing of issues and concerns.

- There should be a central person to coordinate and brief scribes.
- Scribes must be fluent in both English and the prevalent language spoken in the area where the public participation activity is held.
- The response and action committed to by the relevant political principals must also be accurately captured. This is crucial in terms of accountability.
- The coordinator needs to collect all scribes' notes and collate them into a follow-up report of all issues raised.
- A fortnight after the public participation activity, it may be necessary to visit the province to obtain their report back as well as to discuss the development of a consolidated report.

This will ensure that action is taken and communicated to the affected province or area. The Head of Communication in the province needs to ensure that feedback from provincial departments, national departments and all other responsible entities is communicated to the affected communities. 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 public participation event.

### **10.4. The GCIS' regional distribution network**

The GCIS has established more than 4 000 distribution points across the country. These points may be utilised by departments for the distribution of their communication products and dissemination of messages. Each of the nine GCIS provincial offices has an information resource centre (IRC) where material can be sent for distribution.

The GCIS also has two additional IRCs, one at head office in Pretoria and one at the Parliamentary Office in Cape Town.

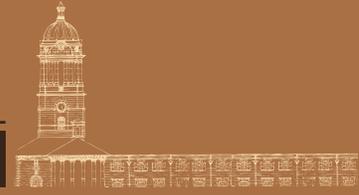
### **How can I make use of GCIS' distribution network?**

To properly manage distribution support, several key principles have been put in place.

The process outlined below is tailored specifically for a partnership with the GCIS regional offices and district offices. The complete development of a distribution strategy for a campaign, which includes marketing and media buying, is handled by the Directorate: Marketing of the GCIS. Usually, such a strategy would have formed part of an overall communication strategy development process, which would in such cases be directed to the GCIS Project Desk.

- If material has to be distributed through the regional and district networks of the GCIS, the client department needs to have a manageable size of resource material (few thousand and not millions as such large volumes require procurement processes).
- A rule of thumb is about 10 000 per province as print runs of 90 000 to 100 000 are manageable. The GCIS regional offices and partners do not have the capacity to handle bulk distribution.
- The client department needs to approach the Directorate: Provincial Coordination in the GCIS with the request and indicate the development-communication content of the material and the programme it is intended to support.
- A language profile for each province will be provided to guide the client on the quantities and languages to be sent to each specific province.
- The database of all disability groups/organisations around the country assists clients to also reach disability groups and to cater for their needs. It assesses the quantities of, for example, Braille material, which can be managed.
- Contact details of organisations that cater for these special needs are also available on request, so that clients can outsource their services to these.

## CHAPTER 10



- Only once a clear agreement has been reached between the client department and the Directorate: Provincial Coordination, will a detailed brief be sent to each GCIS provincial director with the details of the quantities to expect, delivery dates and who the primary target groups are.
- Once this brief has been agreed to, the client will distribute material at their own cost to regional offices, based on an address list provided by the Directorate: Provincial Coordination.
- Material must reach GCIS provincial offices during the very first or last week of a month. During the first week of a month, all district-based communication officers meet at provincial offices for their monthly staff meeting. The information secretaries in the IRCs will divide your material into district-based distribution groups. Upon leaving for their regions, GCIS' communication officers will take the material with them and start the distribution process using the following principles:
  - The GCIS does not handle short-notice distribution – this is where the material is dated and has to be distributed within a limited timeline. The GCIS only handles educational and information products that have a longer shelf life and where your need is to extend the reach and access of your products, especially to rural communities.
  - Clients will be provided with a distribution profile indicating where the material was distributed and to which primary groups.
- Any resource material sent directly to the GCIS provincial offices, without the written approval of the Directorate: Provincial Coordination will not be distributed.

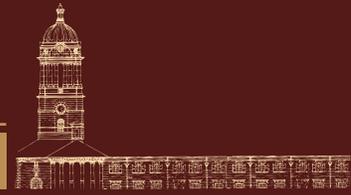
# CHAPTER II

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

#### II.1. Why internal communication in the public sector/government?

A key part of government's communication approach is the recognition that communication is central to all the service-delivery efforts of government.

Though government has made great strides in communicating with the public, in particular around the implementation of its programmes, it is clear that there is a need to complement public communication with improved internal communication to inform and mobilise public servants.

In 2006, Cabinet took a decision that internal communication in government should be strengthened to ensure that public service officials are kept abreast of what government is doing to deliver services to the broader public.

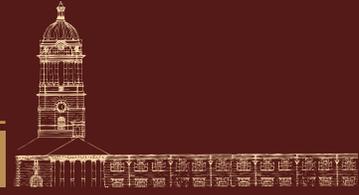
Messages from management should filter down to all employees to provide them with a better understanding of the purpose, goals and directions of government. There should also be methods in place for feedback from employees to upper management. Against this background, internal communication should be seen within the context of broader efforts to build a better performing state.

Clear, concise and consistent communication educates employees, enabling them to appreciate the value of their institutions' programmes and goals. It is a significant element in engaging employees and keeping them focused, committed and productive and aligning everyone's activities.

For government to communicate effectively with its employees, it needs a well-structured and managed internal communication unit that seeks to continually inform staff members of all the programmes and projects carried out in government departments.

A department's internal communication strategy should emerge from, and be guided by, among other things, the department's strategic objectives and its communication strategy, the National Communication Strategy Framework, and the State of the Nation Address.

- Develop mechanisms so that employees are informed of important messages that are being communicated to outside stakeholders.
- Government employees are the ambassadors of government and should be able to reflect the vision of government through their work.



### 11.2. Strategic internal communication

Strategic internal communication impacts on an organisation's effectiveness dramatically. A strategic approach is needed to make sure that the focus is on the right things at the right time and that an impact is made.

The best way to do this is to develop an internal communication strategy (see *Strategy Development Template in Chapter 3*) that takes you from where you are now to where you want to be, and sketches how you will get there. It should be backed up by a detailed action plan:

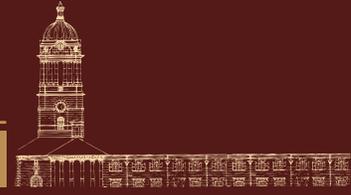
- adding value to your organisation through performance-based communication
- using the most effective communication channels and media for your audiences – from blogs to print
- reinventing the role of the communication function from tactical implementers to strategic change managers
- engaging employees at all levels by connecting them to your organisation's goals and strategic plan for the future
- using leadership communication to build employee trust
- transforming your day-to-day operations to make them more citizen-centred and results-oriented
- ensuring that managers at all levels manage communication well so people have the information when they need it to make the right decisions
- measuring the impact communication has on relevant performance measures such as quality, service and cost
- aligning your internal and external communication strategies to ensure continuity within your organisation and advance your objectives
- fostering mission-focused employee behaviour and culture to support agency goals
- utilising your intranet to inform, align and invigorate employees
- focusing your message to cut through the clutter and deliver your information effectively
- developing an internal branding campaign, communicating with your employees to build your brand, change their behaviour and impact on your organisation's bottom line
- using a balanced scorecard approach to manage and measure your internal communication programme
- getting support from senior leadership and key stakeholders.

#### 11.2.1. Developing an internal communication strategy

It is important to develop an internal communication strategy, which sets out internal communication objectives and how they will be achieved.

The following are suggested as starting points for a communication strategy:

- Convince top management of the importance of communication.
- Build alliances across the organisation to support initiatives.
- Recognise that no single method will be effective.
- Use a mix of approaches and use all available channels where relevant (written, face-to-face, web-based, moving images).



- Target the form(s) of communication to the audience; for example, it may well be appropriate to use different methods for shop-floor employees and senior managers.
- Respect cultural diversity and vary approaches accordingly. This is particularly important in a multinational context, but also bear in mind South Africa's cultural diversity.
- Make sure that messages are consistent, over time and between audiences.
- Ensure clarity of message and keep things as simple as possible. For example, in written communication use short, sharp sentences or phrases – sometimes even without verbs.
- Train managers in communication skills and ensure that they understand the importance of communication.
- Seek wherever possible to develop and sustain two-way communication, dialogue and feedback.
- Ask yourself whether employees feel that the culture of the organisation is such that they can say what they think without discomfort; and if they can't, think about how that culture can be changed.
- Consider whether communication is built into the planning stages of all activities.
- Review communication initiatives to check what has worked, what hasn't, and why.

It is important that the strategy should involve plenty of two-way communication. Make sure that a pledge to “listen to staff” is backed up by visible action; otherwise your improved communication is likely to be met with cynicism rather than trust.

A good internal communication action plan will tie in directly with the strategy, setting out the activities, targets, deadlines and resources needed to implement each element of the strategy. It will also identify lead officers responsible for each action, and build in evaluation so that you can monitor the success of each action.

The action plan is a working document that can be updated and revised as targets are met, circumstances change or new objectives are identified.

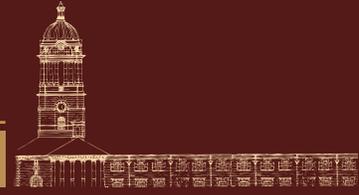
### **11.3. Principles of internal communication**

Effective internal communication is planned to deal with specific issues for the long-term well-being of the organisation.

#### **11.3.1. Timeliness and content**

Providing timely and relevant information to public servants, through channels they use and trust and in languages they understand, remains the basis for successful and strategic internal communication.

Communication content should provide context and rationale for changes or new initiatives as they relate to the Public Service, but especially to the relative performance or requirements of public servants in departmental work units. This underlines the importance of the supervisor's front-line role in communication.



### **11.3.2. Channels**

Face-to-face communication is the richest medium. It should be emphasised in internal communication, especially to resolve conflicts or crises, communicate major changes and celebrate accomplishments.

Excellent listening skills reduce errors and misunderstanding, help uncover problems, save time, improve evaluations and facilitate relationship-building. The development of excellent listening skills among leaders at all levels in the Public Service is crucial.

Social media are fast and powerful dialogue-creating channels that can empower and engage public servants and members. They influence and alter traditional media and their uses, but don't eliminate them. Communicators should blend new and traditional media in ways that help the Public Service to best achieve its goals and enhance relationships with internal publics.

### **11.3.3. Leadership roles**

The CEO or senior leader(s) must be a visible and open champion for internal communication. Visibility is the first and most basic form of non-verbal communication for leaders.

The communication style of leaders should invite open, ongoing and transparent discussion so that people are willing to voice their opinions and suggestions.

The actions of leaders at all levels must match their words. This has everything to do with credibility and the extent to which employees will trust, commit to and follow leaders.

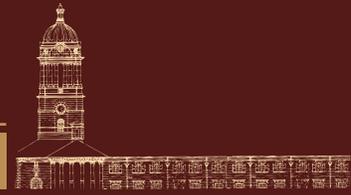
### **11.3.4. Professional communicator roles**

Professional communicators must see themselves as internal experts on communication who serve as facilitators and counsellors to executives and managers and provide strategic support for business plans.

Communicators must also be public service experts. They must possess knowledge of the Public Service's structures, challenges and objectives, as well as understand public servants' issues and needs and marketplace requirements and realities.

### **11.3.5. Participation and recognition**

Encouraging public servants' participation in decision-making builds loyalty and commitment and improves the overall climate for communication in the Public Service. Participative decision-making also often improves the quality of decisions.



Recognising and celebrating achievements at all levels help build shared values and organisational identity. Similar social events, rites and rituals contribute to and reflect a distinctive culture in the Public Service.

### **11.3.6. Measurement**

Measurement is a key to successful communication in any organisation or government department. Through diverse forms and approaches, measurement helps define problems, determines the status quo, records progress, assesses value and provides a factual basis for future direction and action. Improving measurement knowledge and practice is an ongoing professional requirement.

### **11.3.7. Culture**

Ongoing two-way communication is the foundation for employee motivation and organisational success. Two-way communication provides continuous feedback, which is crucial to learning and to processing change in the Public Service.

In addition to achieving specific goals, internal communication should help create and reflect a culture for communication, where public servants at all levels feel free to openly share ideas, opinions and suggestions. This will enhance employee understanding, build trust, stimulate engagement and encourage greater diversity.

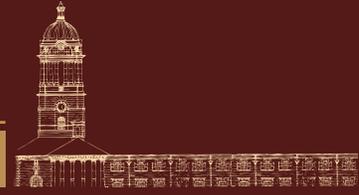
### **11.4. Why will employees benefit from internal communication?**

Strategic internal communication can do more than keep employees informed – it creates a positive state of mind. It can ensure that they work towards a common goal through clear direction and vision. This reduces the capacity for workplace conflict and encourages a knowledge-sharing environment that motivates for better performance and a “bigger-picture” approach.

Internal communication is a vital means of addressing organisational concerns and, if done successfully, helps employees to understand the organisation’s vision, values and culture and establishes formal roles and responsibilities for them.

By maintaining open lines of communication between management and employees, effective internal communication can enhance stronger relationships throughout all levels of the organisation and forge a sense of community.

Internal communication empowers employees, gives them accountability, responsibility and better performance results from a common understanding of the business/organisation. This often improves coordination and co-operation between departments. Employees can readily see how their contribution impacts on the company and its performance.



### Benefits

- Internal communication provides best-practice tools and techniques for organising your department to achieve maximum results.
- A department is able to distinguish itself enough to attract and retain the best and brightest employees and therefore has a strong sense of culture, one that employees help create and want to participate in. Employees feel comfortable enough to not only recognise and accept change and growth, but to participate and lead it.
- Employees at all levels engage in a dialogue to become intimately involved in the organisation and its daily interaction with its stakeholders. Employees can readily see they are working for something larger than themselves, some greater cause, and thus can see the effect of their efforts on the bigger picture.
- Clear communication engenders a strategic discussion about your department and its industry, leading to continuous improvement and innovation that anticipates and addresses market needs. In internal communication, common planning frameworks are needed to ensure consistency and coherence.
- Employees who are better informed are more satisfied, feel more involved in the fate of your organisation and ultimately contribute more to your success. Departments that make internal communication a priority are more likely to reach their objectives with motivated employees. In turn, you can resolve conflicts quickly and improve employee productivity.
- Employees can make more decisions themselves since they have the tools and knowledge to know the “right” decisions in line with the organisation’s goals

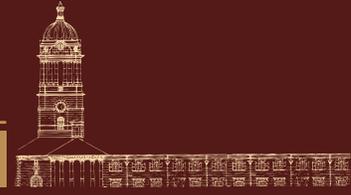
### 11.5. Current status of internal communication in government

Cabinet mandated the GCIS in 2006 to intensify internal communication within the Public Service. This pronouncement by Cabinet was in recognition of the fact that government is the largest employer in the country and as such we need to talk to our people so that they can support our programmes and messages.

In November 2006, the GCIS established the Internal Communication Forum (ICF). The forum brings together all internal communicators who share views and case studies in support of government’s communication programme.

Currently, many departments that have an internal communication unit only focus on disseminating departmental information to their staff members. There is not enough done within departments to promote the implementation of the Government’s Programme of Action (PoA) and looking at strategic internal communication.

Internal Communication’s function is to establish and maintain platforms to effectively reach out to public servants in the department via, for example, the intranet, internal publications, notice bards and news flashes. It conducts



research on platforms, media, products and language preferences to deepen public servants' understanding of departmental programmes. It facilitates the communication of top management decisions to all staff members, including matters relating to ethics in the Public Service and departmental and government policies.

Internal communication in the Public Service is underpinned by the following principles:

- In designing internal communication programmes, experience has shown that there is a need to supplement communication on the ethics of the Public Service with more communication that builds an understanding of the content of departmental programmes.
- There is a need to move beyond circulars and workshops as products and platforms for internal communication in the Public Service, because these alone cannot be sufficient to mobilise for implementation of government's mandate. Therefore, careful thought should be given to media, products and platforms that will effectively reach public servants in a manner that mobilises them for implementation.
- Experience has also shown that content for internal communication within a department can be a contested terrain between what is strictly the mandate of a department, and what is broadly a government mandate. In dealing with this challenge, it is important that the internal government communicator fully appreciates the centrality of government's PoA (within which departmental programmes fall) in designing internal communication programmes. However, it should also be appreciated that there is important work that gets done by government, which might not be included in the Government's PoA.
- Distribution coordination remains a challenge in escalating internal communication efforts in the Public Service. It is therefore important that the internal communicator should have a distribution plan for the information products (to be) developed, and that the GCIS will assist in sourcing relevant information material from departments for internal communicators to distribute to public servants.

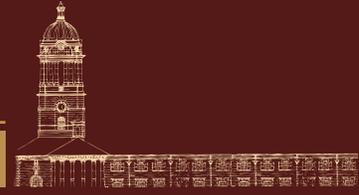
### **11.5.1. Internal communication units in departments**

An internal communication unit is responsible for disseminating information within government. An internal communicator ensures that there is a two-way communication process within the department. It informs the employees on the latest news and developments in the organisation. An internal communicator creates platforms for employees to communicate with management on issues affecting the day-to-day running of the department.

Government's internal communicators are responsible for developing and implementing an internal communication strategy, which should be part of the overall departmental strategy. It is important that internal communicators should understand the role, vision and corporate objectives of government and how its different departments deliver services.

#### **11.5.1.1. Duties may include some or all of the following tasks:**

- ensuring all staff have access to a range of internal communication, so they are able to keep up to date with important news, share information and raise concerns, for example through team meetings, managers' meet-



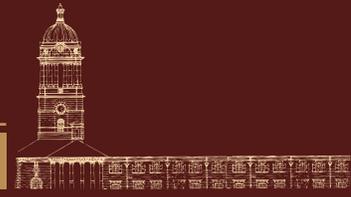
- ings, one-on-one meetings between staff and managers, briefings and e-mail updates by senior staff
- managing the compilation and distribution of the internal staff newsletter, including writing and editing content, arranging photography, overseeing design (and production and print if it is produced in hard copy)
- managing the development of the department's intranet, including working with information technology specialists on the structure and design and working with colleagues across the departments to create suitable content
- consulting with staff across the department to gain their views on internal communication content and their suggestions for improvements
- using staff feedback to recommend and implement new initiatives to improve internal communication
- providing advice and guidance to staff on the use of government's corporate branding and identity
- developing and implementing an internal communication plan (informed by the departmental communication strategy) with key milestones, combining both departmental activities and government's PoA
- developing content for various products and establishing and maintaining platforms to effectively reach out to public servants in the department (for example, internal publications, intranet, notice boards and news flashes)
- distributing material in the department, including to provincial departments and/or offices
- conducting quantitative or qualitative research on platforms, media, products and language preferences to deepen the public servants' understanding of departmental and government's PoA on a regular basis
- organising internal departmental events, including celebrations of national commemorative days, director-general and deputy minister/minister's staff addresses
- motivating staff members to become ambassadors of the Government brand and ensuring that all work towards strengthening the partnership to escalate service delivery
- facilitating the communication of top management decisions to all staff members, including matters related to ethics in the Public Service and departmental and government policies.

### 11.6. Planning for internal communication

Unlike with external communication, departments often fail to strategically plan their internal communication. In other words, internal communication is usually either arbitrary or incomplete and if planned, tends to be planned only in reaction to specific events that forces interaction with workers. Effective internal communication should be a well-planned process that deals with the broad range of issues within the departmental communication strategic goals.

Some basic principles to keep in mind when creating your strategic internal communication plan are:

- develop a long-term focus
- identify clear values for your organisation
- define the specific goals for your internal communication strategy



- use comprehensive and pervasive methods
- be consistent in your messages.

### 11.6.1. Understanding your internal communication needs?

It is important to identify and understand the internal communication needs. This will definitely vary considerably from department to department. It is likely that you will find that your department has a number of areas where internal communication can be improved, with some being more important than others. These needs, and their varying level of importance, will directly inform your internal communication strategy.

It is important to not only rely on employees taking action to read your internal news. E-mail inboxes are flooded, and only a small percentage of staff remembers to check the corporate website and intranet regularly. The only way to ensure that staff read your vital corporate information is to GRAB their attention!

The key challenge of any communication programme is to attract the target audience's attention. People pay attention to messages that are relevant to them. Relevance is created by need (I have to pay attention, as this is key to my job performance) or by desire (this message sounds like it could improve my life).

### 11.6.2. Internal communication channels/platforms

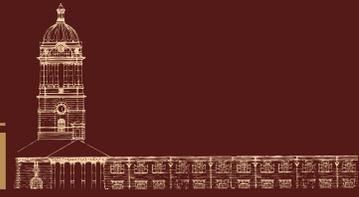
#### Methods

There are many methods of communicating with employees. This section discusses these, starting with traditional top-down methods and moving on to those that are aimed at dialogue.

It should be remembered throughout that audiences differ, and that different techniques may need to be used for different audiences. Departmental size is also important; communication is much easier in a single-site establishment than in a multinational organisation, especially where different languages and cultures are involved.

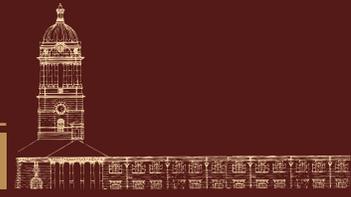
Developments in technology, notably web-based technologies, have increased the range of options in recent years. Intranet and e-mail-based communication are probably now more important than traditional methods such as printed newsletters. One of the benefits of electronic communication is immediacy, and (just as important) enabling immediate feedback. However, it needs to be remembered that in some organisations, not all employees – for example, shop-floor employees or drivers – have access to e-mail or intranet.

- **Notice boards/bulletin boards:** These are part of the furniture, and as such may be ignored. They can get scruffy unless regularly policed. Not for important announcements. Today, there are also electronic bulletin boards, but again they may be ignored by some staff.
- **Newsletters/in-house magazines:** These are regularly produced and may carry features on individual employees and events, as well as organisational news. Nowadays, they may be distributed electronically rather



than printed. They can have a role to play in integrated communication policies, but does everyone read them?

- **Letters:** Addressed to individual employees and perhaps sent to their home addresses, letters should be reserved for issues of major importance, but are more likely to be read than internal memos or e-mails.
- **Video and in-house television:** These are potentially useful, although expensive in larger organisations for introducing, for example, new products or policies. However, badly-produced in-house videos gained a reputation in the 1980s and 1990s as vehicles for management propaganda, so they should be used sparingly. In a few large organisations, in-house television is also used, delivered to employees' desk tops. However, television and video are mainly passive, not a dialogue. People are visually sophisticated these days, so the production must be good.
- **E-mails and intranets:** Messages via e-mail can be targeted to particular groups and sent rapidly, but in some non-office environments not everyone has access to e-mail, so other methods may be needed. Feedback facilities can be incorporated in intranets, so there is some opportunity for two-way communication. Employee-attitude surveys (see below) may be conducted by e-mail.
- **Presentations:** Presentations directed to the workforce by a senior manager can be powerful, although very dependent on the delivery skills of the individual. PowerPoint can add to the experience, but should not be overdone. Time should be allowed for questions and answers, but this is not full two-way communication – many employees may be nervous about having a full and frank public discussion with the boss.
- **Team briefings/group meetings:** Messages are delivered by local managers to established work groups. Here, communication can be face-to-face and a proper dialogue is more possible. Nevertheless, there are dangers. If the same message is intended to be given by various managers, they may deliver it with different emphases, leading to misunderstandings. The scope for misunderstanding may increase where some members of the workforce are not first-language English speakers. There can also be hidden expenses in terms of lost time.
- **Employee-attitude surveys:** These surveys are one way in which management can find out about employees' views and concerns, though the right questions need to be asked (because the questions are devised by managers, they may not reflect what employees would like to be asked).
- **Focus groups:** Focus groups are another way of achieving qualitative feedback.
- **Face-to-face meetings with managers:** Individuals can express their views directly to line managers. They are potentially good methods of two-way feedback, but managers need to understand the importance of upward transmission, and success may depend on how consistently they behave in this respect.
- **Staging of social events:** Internal Communication organises the celebration of calendar days. Briefings on topics such as human rights, HIV and AIDS and women's rights are conducted to create awareness among staff. Celebrations are held a day or two before the actual event to allow staff the opportunity to celebrate.



### **Management By Walking About (MBWA)**

Motivated, committed employees make for increased productivity and more profit. The way in which management communicates with them can be the key to successful motivation or an absolute confidence and commitment.

There is no doubt that a major contributor to the success of a business is the managers' capacity to interact with their employees as often as possible and to be seen to be leading by example – to cheer them on, motivate, encourage and perhaps even chastise them from time to time. Staff appreciates the personal attention that makes them feel special and part of a team or family.

It's not too difficult when one only has a few employees but the big challenge for any chief executive/director-general is to maintain this personal contact. Problems arise, for example, when this personal contact is longer possible and it is replaced with a programme of internal communication.

There are very few people who have a problem with the notion of internal communication being the foundations of a well-run business. Even some accountants and bankers have been known to agree that communication with the rank and file is important and not just something else that marketers in the company have dreamed up to waste money.

However, what many, even seasoned, marketers don't grasp is that communication is not only about word but very much to do with deed as well. Unfortunately, most of these programmes last about a week at best and then it's back to business as half-baked usual – not because there is anything wrong with the programmes.

Senior and middle managers are urged to practise one of the most ignored aspects of communication and management pursuits – MBWA: Management By Walking About.

Perhaps the name itself is its biggest enemy, because it suggests either goofing off or a time-wasting and silly pastime in which no serious person would indulge. In fact, it is one of the most powerful internal communication and motivational tools ever invented.

### **REMEMBER**

A planned approach to internal communication is as critical to long-term business success as an effective external communication strategy. Communication occurs whether planned or not. Without an organised internal communication strategy, the message received is left to chance. Take a proactive approach by creating fluid communication channels in both directions. Aligning the internal message(s) with the mission, vision, values and objectives is the key to the success of an internal communication strategy.

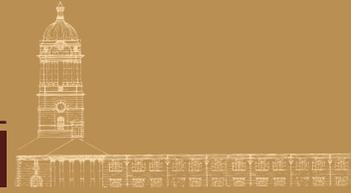
# CHAPTER 12

## CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

#### 12.1. What is a communication campaign?

A communication campaign is defined as “a connected series of operations designed to bring about a particular result” (Kendall 1992). A campaign can further be defined within the context of the project management cycle as follows:

- it has a specific start and end
- it changes to the way things happen (behaviour, attitudes and perceptions)
- it requires a new system or organisational arrangement
- it terminates once the objective is met
- it draws experience and expertise from various people
- it requires teams to meet the necessities of various stages of the project
- it has a specific budget.

Project management is the science and art of assembling necessary ingredients in a project to ensure that a project is successfully implemented from initiation to closure.

All of these basic characteristics of a campaign are clearly articulated in the project plan, which is a road map towards achieving project objectives, from a cost, scope and budget point of view.

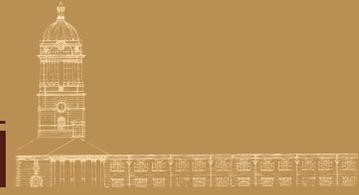
Communication campaigns vary from political, product or service, ideological or issue- or cause-orientated, advertising and public relations. The objectives of carrying out a campaign can also range from public awareness, information and education and seeking to reinforce, change or modify the behaviour and attitude of the targeted public.

#### 12.2. Campaign development

Campaign development and management include both systematic and creative elements. There is a step-by-step process throughout a project life cycle through which a campaign will evolve:

- Step one: Initiation
- Step two: Planning
- Step three: Implementation
- Step four: Closure.

## CHAPTER 12



### Initiation

During this phase, it is recognised that a campaign should start and a commitment is made.

Formal recognition of the need for a campaign requires a clear understanding of the problem/policy background. This phase requires a feasibility study and research (formal or informal). Once certain, the scope (refer to the work that must be done) of the campaign must be determined.

In determining the scope, the following questions must be answered:

- define the problem/broad description of what the campaign is all about
- objectives
- main tasks to be executed, output and timelines or target delivery date
- budget determination
- project risks and constraints
- project's start and completion date.

The Campaign Scope Document entails a detailed description of the amount of work to be carried out in a project and its expected end results or deliverables. It is also concerned with a detailed description of the broad time frames for the project. In other words, it defines parameters within which a project should be implemented.

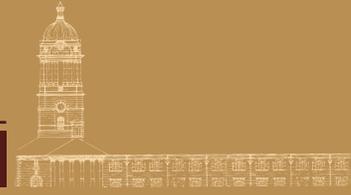
Effective scope management is one of the key factors determining project success. Failure to accurately interpret the clients' needs or problems will produce a misleading definition (scope of work). If this causes rework and additional effort, there may be project costs and time implications.

### Planning

A plan is then compiled to meet the objectives that the project is set out to achieve. The necessary measures are taken because the project is now officially starting. As a matter of principle, the plan should consist of key activities, deadlines, people responsible for implementation and budget. For government, which is largely involved in the business of social marketing, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) has developed standard design guidelines for communication strategy development consisting of nine steps to ensure an effective campaign.

The communication strategy of a campaign becomes an input to a detailed project plan for effective implementation. Usually, a team meeting is required to achieve this collective input.

## CHAPTER 12



Elements of a detailed campaign plan include:

- tasks/activities and timelines
- input required for each task
- quality guidelines per task
- task allocations and responsibilities
- task scheduling or timelines using time tables: which day, week or month.

*Planning can be done with any of the computer software such as Microsoft Word, Excel or Project in a form of a table, outlining the elements above. The advantage of using MS Project is that it provides for systematic task scheduling, work breakdown and easy overview of the campaign's tasks and subtasks.*

Quality refers to the desired standard that the campaign wants to achieve.

For a project to start, there should be resources allocated. Resources can be in the form of project team members, facilities, equipment, etc.

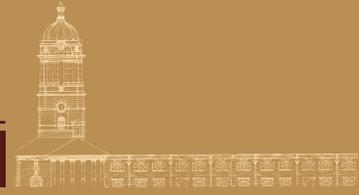
Milestones are important; they are more like a deliverable achieved as a result of the implementation of certain tasks/activities. As task activities are implemented, they culminate in the achievement of a milestone.

Once a plan has been developed, it becomes the basis for implementation. It should be noted that some elements of the project plan might be required within a short space of time given the agile nature of the environment within which we work.

### **Some key aspects of campaign planning to consider:**

- objectives of the campaign
- approach used for the development of the campaign strategy
- how synergy was established with the national Government Communication Strategy
- briefing process to agencies
- criteria used to select the service-provider/agency
- budget and time frames of the campaign.

## CHAPTER 12



### Implementation

This phase is progress-orientated and characterised by ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the developed campaign plan. The challenge here is to ensure that the plan is used as the basis for implementation, becoming also a monitoring tool.

The details of the work to be done are defined and coordinated. Work is assigned for execution. Implementation involves:

- the actual execution of tasks listed in the plan line with deadlines
- monitoring of the implementation of tasks and deadlines
- evaluation of task implementation, quality of deliverables and potential risks.

Tools for monitoring campaign execution include:

- campaign plans (task description, deliverables and deadlines, responsibilities)
- checklists and progress reports (tasks, start-and-finish timelines, responsibilities, progress status and remarks)
- review meetings (this relates to such basic techniques as organising a meeting, drafting an agenda, drafting the minutes of a meeting, developing an action plan arising from the meeting, etc.).

One of the most important elements of managing a campaign is to ensure that it is completed within the estimated time. For a campaign to be completed on time, all activities must be defined, put in a sequence, duration estimated, a schedule developed and controlled.

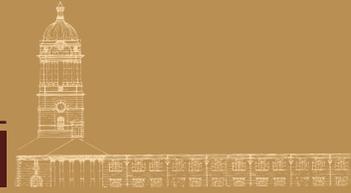
During project communication, information is gathered and distributed to the relevant project team members and stakeholders. Project communication can be both formal and informal. Formal communication is pre-planned, and conducted in a standard format in accordance with an established schedule. Informal communication occurs as people think of information they want to share. Project information can be collected, processed and reported.

Risks are present in all projects, whatever their size or complexity and whatever industry or business sector. As a result, they constantly need to be identified, assessed and managed.

Risk management is a formal approach to the process as opposed to an intuitive approach.

There are both external and internal risks. A plan to mitigate these risks should then be developed and implemented to ensure project success.

## CHAPTER 12



Procurement management: For most projects to be successfully implemented, there is a need for the team to acquire services or products from external providers. It is imperative that services or products to be acquired from external providers be identified and listed in advance to allow the team to properly negotiate their acquisition within the context of the applicable procurement guidelines and policies of the organisation.

### **Some key aspects of campaign implementation to consider:**

- the roles/responsibilities of the department (client) and the service-provider (agency) with regard to the implementation of the campaign
- mechanisms used to monitor the implementation of the campaign
- quality control during the implementation phase
- handling of conflict with the service-provider and/or changes to the scope of the campaign and sign-off at the various milestones during implementation.

## **Closure**

One characteristic that distinguishes a project from other work assignments is that it has a distinct end, a point in time at which all associated work is done and results are achieved. It is around this time that the extent to which the desired outcomes were achieved can be gauged.

This will enable determining whether the campaign was well conceived, well planned or well performed. Closure is information, which is captured throughout the life of the project, and it is important to capture it while still fresh in the participants' minds.

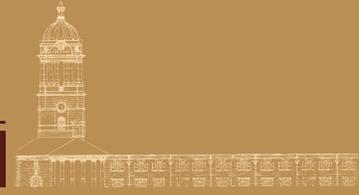
Project team members must now ensure that all the work is completed in a timely and efficient manner. The purpose of the project is now reflected upon to check if it has been within time, cost and specifications. After the campaign is completed, it has to be evaluated. Evaluation focuses on the performance of the campaign and the extent to which the campaign has met its objectives.

Setting up of a campaign evaluation session to develop an exit report: After a project has been closed, an exit report is prepared to officially close the project. The exit report outlines whether the campaign has achieved what it set out to achieve or not.

The team needs to ask itself difficult questions:

- did the campaign deliver the objectives as set out in the plan?

## CHAPTER 12



- what were the campaign's constraints?
- were the stipulated deadlines and timelines as stated in the plan satisfactorily met?
- have we learnt from our experiences and how will we apply those lessons and best practices to improve in future?

Lessons learnt: Lessons learnt during the project are documented and recommendations made. Lessons learnt form an integral part of the project closure phase.

The beneficiary of every campaign is the target audience, who are normally a segment of the public. Therefore, the real measure of a campaign's success should be its impact on their lives, not just how well the individuals or teams performed their tasks or how much media coverage the campaign received.

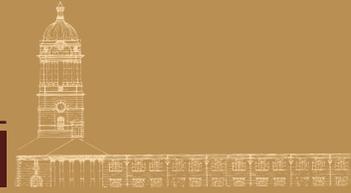
### **Some key aspects of campaign closure to consider:**

- how was the evaluation of the campaign handled?
- how was contract closure handled?
- what were the major successes achieved by the campaign?
- what were the major obstacles encountered during the campaign?
- what were the most valuable lessons learnt from managing the campaign?

### **12.3. Elements of a successful campaign**

The following tips have been gathered from the GCIS' experience in planning a successful campaign:

- **Project initiation**
  - Project scope: All the activities of the project team are guided by the approved campaign scope. Care should be taken to ensure that the team reflects the key areas in the scope brief, e.g. media liaison, research, community outreach and mobilisation, production, buying and placement (radio, video/television, design and layout, print, etc).
  - Financial implications: For campaigns with huge financial implications (over R1 million budget for instance), a team member should be nominated from the Finance Section or someone within the team should be nominated to handle the project's budget, including monitoring of expenditure and budget reconciliation.
  - Team members: The nomination of all team members should be preceded by a face-to-face briefing on the envisaged role of each one in the campaign and critical deadlines to be met.
  - Previous reports: Before any campaign could be initiated, the communicator should ask himself/herself a simple question: Was the department ever involved in a similar project of this nature? If yes, the project's exit report should be sourced, and read, with a view to presenting it in the first meeting of the project team



to ensure that the team is able to appreciate from the beginning possible project “blind spots” and plan around them.

- **Project coordination**

- All campaigns should have a project plan in addition to a communication strategy to outline key tasks and deadlines to be delivered by each team member. Once a strategy has been approved, it is advisable that such a plan be distilled from the strategy to guide implementation.
- Every project team meeting should have an agenda, checklist and communication strategy, and there should be prior discussion (telephonic and/or through e-mail) with the supervisor to agree on the key issues to be discussed in the meeting.
- In coordinating interdepartmental projects, we should insist to clarify the roles/contributions of the department’s representative(s) in the project. There should also be agreement on the sign-off processes in the department and the key liaison contact point for the department.
- In coordinating a campaign, the communicator should ensure that he/she reads/studies and fully understands the policy or programme that has led to the campaign project he/she is coordinating. In instances where the coordinator does not understand the origin of the policy or programme he/she is working on, it becomes difficult for one to give strategic communication counsel or support to the project team and the department.

- **Use of project planning tools such as Microsoft Project**

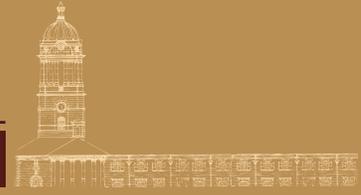
- Microsoft Project provides you with a systematic outline of project tasks and subtasks that must be performed to achieve campaign output-visibility. It is a defined format that assists you in scheduling tasks and resources consistently and effectively.
- Microsoft Project will help you develop quick project plans so that you can monitor the implementation of your campaign progress to be monitored.

### **12.4. Getting assistance for your project from GCIS**

Here is a brief outline of the process when requesting GCIS assistance:

- To ensure coordination and efficient tracking, clients need to log a written request.
- The Project Management Office (PMO) assesses its relevance and appropriateness to the Government Communication Programme and Government Communication Strategy before logging it formally.
- After logging the request, the PMO will liaise with the client department to determine in detail the scope of the project. The PMO assesses the capacity and skills required for the implementation of the proposed project before confirming if GCIS would be in a position to provide the required assistance.
- After checking GCIS capacity in this regard, the PMO will refer the request to a designated project team and subsequently inform the client department accordingly.

## CHAPTER 12



- An agreement will have to be entered into with the client department, detailing conditions under which services will be rendered by the GCIS to the client department. This agreement clarifies the roles of the client and the GCIS respectively and key target dates for delivery and other important deadlines. It must be signed by officials with the right level of authority, preferably accounting officers of the two departments.

The PMO is willing to share its knowledge in project management, which is specifically customised for communication campaigns. Enquires can be directed to 012 314 2496.



# CHAPTER 13

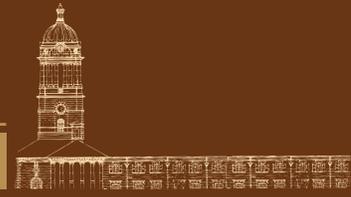
## EVENT-MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Event management



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### EVENT-MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

This guide provides general guidance to help anyone planning an event to organise and manage it safely. For the purposes of this guide, an event is defined as:

“Any planned open air/outside activity that involves organisation by an individual or a committee, to which members of the public will have access, either free of charge or for an entrance fee.”

#### 13.1. Introduction

These guidelines have been designed to provide information to departments to assist in arranging an event, regardless of size. However, some parts may not be relevant for smaller events. The guide gives general advice that should be used when arranging any type of event.

However, it must be remembered that events can be extremely diverse, ranging from a simple press conference to a large outdoor launch, and therefore these guidelines cannot be considered as exhaustive. It is likely that additional guidance will be required for specialist events and larger-scale activities. Should you require more information, it is advisable to seek advice from specialists in the field.

#### 13.2. Types of events

- Press conferences/media briefings.
- Launches.
- Gala dinners.
- Concerts.
- Stadium events.
- Public-holiday events.
- Outreach programmes.

***Not all of the following will be required for all events. Be selective when going through the list to see what would be applicable for your event.***

When risk issues are addressed in the community consultation and planning process, ensure you are also well positioned to include the positive benefits and opportunities. Issues that contribute to enjoyment and success are:

- entertainment and activities
- good information and communication
- positive media reporting



- good coordination
- safe and secure locations
- good health and welfare facilities
- transport arrangements
- sponsorship
- volunteers.

While managing risk is important, so too is making the event an experience of positive enjoyment and success for all stakeholders. This will make the greatest contribution towards managing risk.

### 13.3. General event-planning checklist

Here are some questions to consider when planning your event.

#### • Establishment of the project team

It is important to put together a project team. The team must comprise stakeholders' representatives who are involved in the event and need to focus, depending on the event, on all the relevant aspects such as communication and content; logistics; security; media, protocol; etc. Depending on whether the event will be held in a specific province and most likely in a specific municipality, you also need to involve officials from the province and municipality.

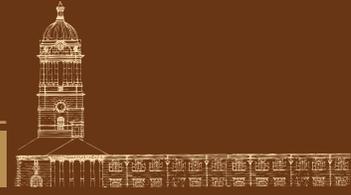
Protocol plays a very important part, especially if political principals are involved and if this is the case, the VIP Protection Unit needs to be contacted. A team should be put together to enhance full coordination of the event. Various roles should be given to members of the team. This will encourage and promote the participation of all people in the event or planned activity.

#### • Develop an event brief

The lead department must convene the first meeting that will develop the event brief. It is vital to develop an event brief that will serve as a concept document throughout the duration of the event. The event brief will outline the objectives of the event to ensure that everyone working on the project is on par on what needs to be achieved. For smaller events that don't have that much logistics, an event brief will not be necessary.

#### • Budget

- Will the event pay for itself, for example through ticketing or sponsorship, or will it be free?
- Is there funding available from local, state or commonwealth governments?
- Are there any other organisations that could provide funding?



- What sort of financial records will need to be kept?
- What are the accountability issues?

The detailed budget for the entire event should be finalised and confirmed after the event brief has been done. Budget items have to be costed realistically e.g. marketing (TV and radio, outdoor advertising); products (banners, posters, brochures); event logistics (venue, food, security, stage building, sound, lighting); other (security, protocol etc.).

### • **Procurement procedures**

Depending on the size and the needs of events, departments are allowed to outsource some services to outside suppliers. This process needs to be done according to the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) Guidelines. It is advised that if departments are to outsource some services, they need to do so in time to allow for proper planning. The easiest way is to procure the services of an event-management company, which in turn will procure other services. Should this route be taken, there needs to be clear guidelines on the signing off of content, what the company is allowed and not allowed to do and what departmental officials will be responsible for.

### • **Draft an action plan**

Once your team and other role players, its objectives and funding are in place, the final product of the strategising meeting will be a detailed action plan that will include all elements of the event, clear deadlines, persons responsible and dates of the follow-up status meetings.

### • **Confirming event venue**

The venue of any event is critical to its success. This needs to be done as soon as the event brief has been finalised. It is important to choose a venue that is suitable for the type of function and most importantly, that will accommodate the number of guests invited. The team needs to do a thorough site inspection to ensure that the venue is capacitated with everything needed for the function. Site inspections should be done before confirmation of venue. If the venue is going to be in a marquee, proper procedures need to be followed in terms of assembling a marquee for a government event.

The structure needs to be approved by the municipal office and other relevant bodies. If you have to mobilise crowds, you need to ensure that there are people close to your venue and that transport won't cost most of your budget to bus people to the event – unless this is adequately budgeted for. Refreshments for your guests are also important and depend on the type of function – look at, among other things, the background and culture of your guests and the type of function when deciding on your menu.



- **Confirmation and securing of speakers**

It is crucial to secure and confirm speakers as early as the date of the event is confirmed, to allow for proper planning and organising. Most prominent speakers (e.g. ministers, executive mayors, premiers, etc.) are normally secured in advance because of their busy schedules. You need to constantly check if they are still coming and if required, draft speaker notes; brief the security and other personnel; etc. Depending on the level of the speaker, you might have to talk to his/her personnel to ensure that you're not caught off guard in terms of, for example, providing a holding room; special dietary requirements; beverages, etc.

- **Marketing and advertising of the event**

Depending on the type of the event, a proper marketing strategy should be drafted and clear target audience and marketing tools and channels should be indicated. The marketing should be done before the event takes place.

- **Guest list**

A guest list must be compiled and approved by relevant officials. It should comprise all stakeholders involved in the event – e.g. the public, stakeholders, partners, sponsors, etc. You also need to indicate how each of these audiences will be invited e.g. the public via general mobilisation posters; sponsors through official invitations, etc.

- **Sending out invitations**

The guests need to be invited in advance to ensure maximum attendance of the event. The RSVP deadline must be clearly stated on the invitation as well as the date, venue, time and dress code of the function. Proper follow-ups must be made to the invitees to remind them to RSVP.

- **Protocol procedures**

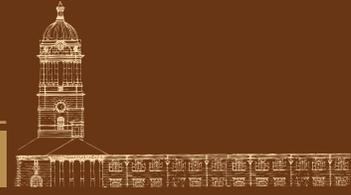
Depending on the calibre of the guest invited, it is important to follow specific protocol procedures, guided by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation. The department has a dedicated unit that deals with protocol for government events and is able to assist on request. Protocol will have an impact on your seating arrangements and programme. Protocol is an important part of all events, ranging from invited guests to the contents of all speeches, which should be approved on time, and recognising all key people invited.

- **Risk management/crisis management**

For every government event, it is important for the team to draft a risk management plan that would assist in organising the event much more efficiently. Should the event befall an unplanned and costly crisis, the plan can assist in planning ahead to regulate and solve the problem.

- **Payments of suppliers**

All suppliers must be paid accordingly; at least a certain percentage of the total quotation must be paid to the



service-providers. All invoices must be submitted on time. You need to check with suppliers regularly and ensure you are on the same page regarding their deliverables, what you expect, delivery times, set-up times, de-rigging times, etc.

### **Execution of event**

All team members need to ensure that everything is in place and that the programme runs accordingly. Each team member needs to have a responsibility in ensuring that the event is a success.

- **Contact officer**

Among the team, the leaders should ensure that all people know who the contract officer is for easy communication.

- **Business liaison/event branding**

Government events should reflect and promote government business values and goals at all times. This principle should be seen in the event itself as it unfolds. The event should be able to tell people what government stands for. It is very crucial to follow proper guidelines when using the Coat of Arms in any branding material.

- **Publicity/media**

Depending on the type of event, of importance to event management is the publicity of the event. This will ensure that there is greater integration and understanding among the ordinary even before the events. A communication strategy and a media plan should be put together for the planned events.

Through these strategies and plans, the organisation will be able to market itself. The publicity should take into cognisance the needs of people with all forms of disabilities and those without. The messages should be distributed to all target audiences as segmented.

- **Sponsorships**

Should sponsorship be required, a detailed sponsorship document needs to be drafted that will guide sponsors and the sponsored on the benefits of the sponsorship. A proposed sponsorship list should be compiled with companies that might benefit from your event. These companies should be approached formally to get an indication of their interest. The letters should be followed up with a meeting to discuss details. Once agreed, the sponsorship should be formalised by a letters from the company as well as an acknowledgement from the department. It is advisable to draft a detailed checklist for each sponsor to ensure all areas are covered. Remember to always check the sponsors' corporate identity when using logos on event material.



- **Information and signage**

- Information in alternative formats: Information about an event should also be provided in alternate formats to include people with disabilities. The information should be placed at all key access points for easy access.
- Signage: All signage should be clear with good colour contrast. To assist people with colour blindness and low vision, colours of red and green should not be incorporated together into signage. Lower-case lettering should be used rather than capital letters and a black-on-white background provides the best contrast. The international symbols for access and deafness should identify accessible toilets and hearing loops.

### 13.4. Key questions

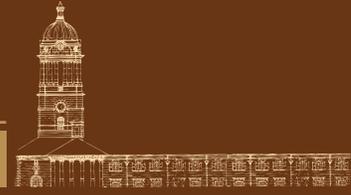
#### Initial planning

- What are the overall aims e.g. safety, fund-raising, entertainment, management?
- Will a specific message be delivered through the event?
- What will the event include and not include?
- Should there be a number of events?
- Will an event coordinator be required?
- Does the plan fit well with activities that normally take place in that part of the town or community?
- Is there a way of spreading the risk and work?
- What is the lead time for organising the event?
- Which state and local government agencies need to be advised about the proposed event?
- In which area will the event be held? What are the positives and negatives of this area/venue?
- Is this an annual event or once-off? If it is yearly, what are the lessons learnt from the previous year's event, and how do we improve this year's event? (*This should be guided by the exit report from the previous year.*)

#### Logistics

- When can the venue be accessed?
- Who is the caretaker for the venue?
- Will there be a contract for specific venue hire?
- What sort of equipment is needed for a successful event?
- Is there enough lighting?
- How will everyone get there?
- What transport should be arranged?
- What if it rains?
- What are the crowd-control issues?
- Will security be required? Who can provide security?
- Are there likely to be any noise issues associated with the event?

## CHAPTER 13



- What can be done to ensure there is minimal impact on the community and area immediately adjacent to the event?
- Are there likely to be concerns with drug and alcohol abuse?
- Are there any emergency procedures to consider?
- When will police, fire or ambulance services need to be involved?
- What are the health and safety issues and who is likely to be affected by any procedures addressing occupational and health matters?
- Who will look after the management of traffic?
- Will the rate of traffic flow require an application for road closures?
- Who takes away the waste that will be generated at this event?
- Who can supply food at the event?
- How will drinking water be supplied at the event?
- Are there any licences associated with selling or giving away food and/or drinks at the event?
- Is the venue able to host a certain number of people without any stampedes or the building falling down? Are there emergency exit points in case of fire?

### **Staffing**

- What will staff do? What won't staff do?
- How will everyone know what their role is?
- Will support workers/professionals be required in the team?
- Are there other steps that need to be taken to ensure appropriate levels of child protection?
- How will volunteers provide assistance for the event?

### **Insurance**

- What are the potential legal liabilities arising out of staging an event?
- What information is required about insurance for public events?
- What are the risks with volunteers?
- What insurance is needed for hired equipment?
- If the structure/venue of the event crushes down, are the guests' belongings and all the equipment within the venue insured?

### **Publicity**

- Will the event benefit from publicity?
- Will publicity be free or paid for?
- What sort of messages need to be promoted?

## CHAPTER 13



### **Risk assessment**

Please remember that organisers of events have a legal responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any employees, volunteer helpers or contractors involved in arranging the event, and to the public and participants attending. This must be ensured by carrying out detailed risk assessments. All hazards associated with the event must be identified, the level of risk assessed and appropriate action taken to reduce these risks to an acceptable level.

#### **Remember**

Careful planning and organisation will help ensure your event is successful and, above all, **SAFE**.



# CHAPTER 14

## DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A GOVERNMENT WEBSITE

Web sites



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





### DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A GOVERNMENT WEBSITE

#### 14.1. Introduction

Government has the responsibility to make government information and services available easily, widely and equitably. Websites are one of the initiatives that can be used by government departments for the electronic dissemination of information.

Websites should be comprehensive online depositories for government information, while government must be responsive to the needs of the citizens by providing as many as possible services online. Websites should also provide a medium for two-way communication between government and citizens.

While it is important for each government website to reflect the character of its department, users of government websites will benefit from a standardised approach. There is a need for some level of consistency and conformity between government websites to assist the user to find information easily.

The guidelines in this chapter aim to support government departments to achieve these objectives.

#### 14.2. Steps in developing or revamping a website

A departmental website provides a snapshot of the department and is an important marketing tool for the department. Any project to develop a new website or to revamp/redevelop an existing website should therefore be carefully planned and executed in a structured manner. The following broad phases normally form part of such an initiative:

**Before a website can be developed, proper planning is vital.**

##### 14.2.1. Determine the purpose and aim of the website

A department should have a clear purpose for its website to ensure it is a success. The expected benefits of the website should be stated, for example why should the department have a website, what will be its objectives, and what value will it add for the department? In general, the purpose of a government website should be to:

- provide its target audiences with easily accessible online information on the department's mandate, functions, services, programmes and activities
- provide a vehicle for interaction between the department and the audience
- promote the department's and government's image.



### **14.2.2. Identify the website audience**

The department should determine who the target audiences for its website are. An understanding of the audience will influence how the website will be designed and developed, for example what should be available on the website (what should the department communicate to each of the target audiences) and what functionalities will be included.

### **14.2.3. Identify suitable content for the identified target audiences**

A crucial element of an effective government website is good content. Suitable content should be identified and/or created before the website is developed.

A useful way to do this is to conduct an information audit within all units in the department to determine what information and communication products meant for public consumption are available in the department and where the main content sources are. This should result in a content plan, specifying what is available and where, and what content should be generated additionally for the website. An important principle is to plan for the ideal situation, even if you are not going to implement the full spectrum of content immediately.

### **14.2.4. Determine the type of website needed**

Until recently, most websites comprised “static” pages with an HTML structure. This type of website allows for little interactivity and can be time-consuming and expensive to update or revamp. This is particularly relevant for websites with large amounts of information, or information that changes frequently.

A more flexible approach is the “dynamic” website where part or all of the content resides in a database. The website itself consists of one or more design templates that define the website’s look, along with some programming that describes what information from the database is to be included and where it will appear. When the website is browsed, the pages that appear in users’ browsers are assembled “on the fly” from the templates and relevant information from the database. The dynamic approach offers opportunities for filtering and decentralised maintenance. When considering this option, the following should, among other things, be kept in mind:

- All browsers should be able to read the dynamic pages.
- The system should be simple to manage.
- The syndication of information from specific owners in the department will probably be required. Content owners will have to become responsible for a particular page or group of pages.

### **14.2.5. Structure content**

The content that has been identified has to be structured by planning the information architecture (site map, storyboard). Divide or chunk the information into logical categories and subcategories down to the content level itself. The hierarchy should be built from the most general concepts, down to the most specific topics. You can follow a top-bottom or a bottom-top approach.



Remember that users think differently, and therefore you have to consider categorising the same piece of information under more than one heading where relevant. Following the departmental structure might also not be the most logical from a user's point of view.

### **14.2.6. Label the categories and subcategories**

The next step is to label or name your categories. It is important to do this before the development phase.

An effective labeling scheme is important for all content areas. Keep the labeling as clear and concise as possible. Once you have decided on names for all categories and subcategories, it should be kept consistent throughout the website.

Note: it is important to get approval from top management for the content architecture and labeling of categories before you move to the next phase!

### **14.2.7. Decide on a navigation scheme**

Determine a suitable navigation scheme to help users move easily around in the website. That will make it easier for them to find the information they need. Remember that, as users do not think or behave similarly, provision should be made for different user behaviours.

### **14.2.8. Acquiring and writing content**

No website should be launched without substantive content. The content identified for the website will need to be provided by the relevant content owners. Some of the existing content will have to be edited or rewritten for the web as medium, while new content will have to be written and signed off. This phase should take place consecutively with the planning phases as discussed in paragraphs 2.1.4 to 2.1.7 and the prototype development phase (see paragraph 2.3.1). The content should be available before the templates (see par 2.3.2) are developed. If not, it may hold back the completion of the website's development.

### **14.2.9. Developing the website**

Develop different prototypes (two or three) for the website's home page and next level pages. These prototypes may require several iterations before one is approved by top management. When it is approved, the development of the individual pages can start.

- Create templates for the home page and different sections of the website.
- Create all pages using the templates.
- Obtain approval and launch the website.

### **14.2.10. Evaluating the website**

It is necessary to evaluate the website before implementation and thereafter at regular intervals. Reasons for this



include that websites are dynamic and constantly growing, the department or user needs might change and because of continuous development in information technology.

Evaluation methodologies that may be considered include: analysing user feedback, monitoring and analysing website user statistics, usability testing, heuristic reviews (evaluation of website against quality criteria and principles), interviews with users, conducting an online survey, and/or focus-group testing.

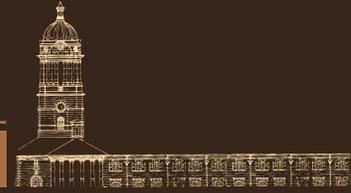
### **14.3. Best practice guidelines for quality government websites**

#### **14.3.1. Scope of information posted on the website**

The website's content should be relevant to its aim, purpose and audience. It should be broad enough and deep enough to meet the audience's needs.

Ideally, all government websites should contain the following minimum content:

- “About us”: This category should provide an overview or introduction to the department and should include the following information:
  - minister and deputy minister responsible for the department, with his/her biography, responsibilities and contact information
  - vision, mission, goals and objectives
  - organisational structure and responsibilities of units (down to at least director level)
  - leadership (DG, DDG, and chief directors) and short biographies for each
  - vacancies (ideally with the application form Z83 available for downloading and recruitment policies and procedures)
  - bids advertised and awarded
  - information about advisory bodies and associated statutory bodies.
- “Contact us”: complete contact information for the department.
- “Services”: services rendered by the department to the public, business and organisations, foreign nationals and other government departments.
- “Programmes”: departmental programmes, projects and campaigns.
- “Legislation” (Acts, Bills, regulations) for which the department has the lead responsibility.
- “Resource centre”: documents, publications, policy documents, strategic documents, newsletters, audio and video resources. It is also good practice to post documents that invite the public to comment upon prominently on the website.
- “Newsroom”: speeches, media statements, announcements, events related to the department and ministry.
- “Links”: selection of links to relevant websites. A general principle is that a department should not duplicate information on other websites for which they do not have authoring responsibilities, as they may risk the simultaneous publication of conflicting versions of the same information.
- “Frequently asked questions” (FAQs): answers to enquiries from users that are asked frequently.



Other features that must be included as part of the website are:

- A link to the South Africa Government Online website, [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za), should be available on the home page.
- “About the website”. This should include an orientation to the website, for example the purpose and aim of the website, the intended target audiences, an overview of the scope of information on the website and site-specific help information.
- “Terms and conditions of use”. This page must contain provisions with regard to issues such as copyright, intellectual property rights and security. It must also include a disclaimer to protect the owner department from any liability.
- “Feedback”. The website should have a facility that provides a means for users to give feedback or comments about the website.
- Site map.
- An area where new information posted on the website is announced. This can be the home page or a page specifically created for this purpose.
- Search functionality (for bigger websites).

### **14.3.2. Authority and accuracy of the website**

Information on website must be accurate – the factual content must be correct and spelling and grammatical errors must be avoided.

Where information originates from sources such as books, journals, articles, brochures or other types of publications, the source must be indicated. Include adequate citations to these sources to confirm the accuracy of information and for the user to determine the origin.

Speeches and media statements must contain adequate source indications (for example, speaker, government institution, contact information, date of delivery). This will strengthen the credibility of information.

Quality control of information should be done before posting thereof, as well as on a regular basis thereafter to prevent any compromise to the integrity of information on the website.

### **14.3.3. Information architecture/organisation of information**

Structuring information is as important as the content itself. A website should have a logical organisational structure or architecture for presenting information. The purpose of this architecture is to help users apply the website by functioning as a “map”. A good architecture will provide order and help users to find information.



Principles in this regard include:

- Information must be divided into logical and digestible parts. However, subdividing information too much may fragment information and will frustrate users who wish to read or print the complete text.
- Information should be grouped into clearly defined areas. It is preferable to duplicate links to information rather than to confuse users with similar information in more than one area of the website.
- Decisions will have to be taken on the number of levels the website should have. The best practice is to provide information in the fewest possible steps. However, with larger sites more levels of navigation might be needed. A balance between two approaches will need to be found: a flat approach where many navigation choices provide access to information in a few steps (this provides quick access to content but may present a confusing number of choices), or a deep approach where fewer choices at the outset provide access to information in more steps with an increasingly narrowing focus (this requires more clicks and allows users to make more informed decisions).
- Use a consistent way of grouping, ordering, labelling and arranging information.

Government-services information forms an important part of a government website. Principles for presenting information about government services include:

- where relevant, information should be provided for the different audiences (government to citizens, government to organisations/business, government to foreign nationals, government to government)
- services within each of these groups should be organised according to one or more logical categories (for example, life events, subjects/topics).

Each service should be presented in the following format:

- title of service
- description (definition, description, to whom applicable, requirements, conditions)
- steps to follow (the steps to be taken by the applicant to apply for the service)
- legal framework (the regulations governing the provision of the service, for example Act, policy, programme)
- service standard (the standards according to which a service has to be rendered by the department to the applicant, for example time frame, formalities departmental employees must follow in providing the service)
- cost (payment required from the applicant/client to acquire the service)
- forms to complete (all forms to be completed by the applicant/client to apply for the service)
- contact details (where the applicant/client can get further information).

#### **14.3.4. Language and writing style**

Website content should be presented in a way that can be understood by all users, regardless of their education, background or sophistication.



In general, the guidelines in the *Editorial Style Guide*, which forms part of this handbook, apply also for websites. However, the following guidelines are particularly important to keep in mind when preparing content for your website:

- Although English is currently the official language used for government websites, material prepared in any of the other official languages should also be posted. Consideration should also be given to translate information into the other official languages.
- Write for the Internet as medium – do not merely replicate printed brochures or other material developed for other mediums.
- Information to be read online must be concise and structured for fast scanning, for example with bulleted or numbered lists to represent a lot of information in a concise manner.
- Use “newspaper” style, starting from the most important information and then moving to the least important (inverted pyramid style).
- Plain language principles should be followed. The content and language must be user-friendly and understandable by all people.
- The website should be relatively formal and business-like, but not overly so. Avoid clichés, jargon and humour.
- Use short sentences and paragraphs.
- Avoid passive voice.
- Headings and subheadings must be descriptive, clearly phrased and understandable.
- Content must be free of typing, grammatical or language errors.
- Acronyms and abbreviations: write out the first time with abbreviation in brackets. Avoid the use thereof in navigation, but if used, include the full name as alternate text (ALT or TITLE attributes). Avoid using acronyms for main navigation options.
- Limit the use of capitalisation and underlining.

### **14.3.5. Navigation and search**

A logical and consistent navigation scheme is key to improved access to information on the website. The navigation scheme of a website should give users a coherent means of finding information, reminding users where they are within the website’s structure, and helping users who arrive at the site without going through the home page.

Government websites should include common navigation options in the top and side navigation bars of each page. The top navigation options should include “Contact us”, “Help” and “Search”, and the side navigation “Home”, “About us”, “Services”, “Resource Centre”, “Newsroom” and “Links”, as well as the rest of the departmental-specific site navigation options. These navigation options should be available as text navigation, not images.



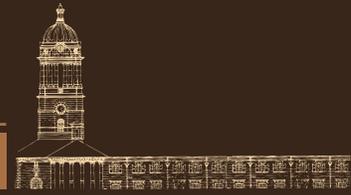
Main principles to consider when determining your site's navigation include the following:

- Every page on the website must have a link to the home page.
- A link to the disclaimer should be available on every page.
- Navigation must be consistent throughout the website.
- Navigation must be simple and intuitive.
- Navigation options should be clear and large enough to be easily read and selected.
- Provide different navigation routes for users to follow.
- The website should offer constant visual and functional confirmation of the user's whereabouts in the website.
- Always provide an opportunity for the user to move back in the hierarchy (not by using the "Back" option in the browser).
- Use a breadcrumb trail on all pages to help users to move to higher categories and to determine where they are.
- There must be no broken links on the website – check links continuously.
- Links must be made only to websites that are authoritative.
- Deep linking is preferred, i.e. where possible, link directly to the page where the relevant information can be found. Links names must be as close as possible to the page linked to. Links to other websites must be indicated and should open in a new window.
- Long documents should be avoided. They can be divided into smaller documents, which are then given an internal navigation structure. This normally involves creating a table of contents, linking to each main section heading. Each part of the document should be accessible from the other parts, and a link should be provided to take the user to the next or previous part of the document. It should always be possible to access the table of contents. A parallel link should be provided to a separate file that contains the full-length document.
- Avoid the excessive use of links embedded within body text, as it may distract and may affect readability of the document. Links in text should also not duplicate the function of the menu.
- Short, common terms should be used for navigation menus, and acronyms and abbreviations that may be unfamiliar to the user should be avoided.
- Include a site map on your website to help the user to determine the content architecture.

A search function should be part of bigger websites. It should be easy to use and provide accurate and concise results. Help should be provided on how to search for information on the website.

### **14.3.6. Design and layout**

The visual elements of the website should assist users to understand the function and purpose of the website. Design should not be used to entertain, but to make the website more informative and professional. It should not distract users from the content.



All government websites must display the following elements on all pages:

- The banner must include the Coat of Arms, accompanied by the name of the department on the left-hand side on a white background, according to the Government's corporate identity guidelines. The South African flag must be displayed on the right-hand side of the banner. The space between the Coat of Arms and flag can be used by the department to display an image that reflects the unique identity of the department.
- A link to the home page (except from the home page itself).
- Main navigation categories (preferably displayed in the left-hand navigation bar and at the bottom of pages – see Navigation and search).
- All pages should include the “contact us”, “help”, and “search links” (preferably at the top of the page in a navigation bar below the banner).

Main principles that should be considered include the following:

- Pages on the website should be consistent in layout and typographical style.
- It is recommended not to use frames.
- Develop for resizable screens, with a minimum of 800 X 600 pixels.
- The typography must contribute to the legibility of text.
- Text must be clearly visible and easy to read. Avoid using busy backgrounds. If backgrounds are used, ensure that text contrasts well with the background. Avoid flashing text.
- Implementation of graphics, images and animation should be carefully used so that they increase the effectiveness of the website and not hinder users' access to information. Graphics should be limited. Animation, scrolling and meaningless graphics should be avoided – they make websites busy and distract from the content. However, a big amount of text can be difficult to read. Strategically placed lines or graphic elements can be used to break a long document into manageable portions.
- Avoid using images to convey textual information.
- Any image conveying information or linking to information should have an alternate text description (ALT or TITLE attributes).
- The website should be usable with graphics turned off.
- The website should be designed to allow users to both read documents online and to print them.
- Support for downloading PDF documents should be provided. Documents in PDF format should be indicated as such and a link to instructions on how to download PDF documents should be provided.
- Site covers or splash pages should be avoided.

#### **14.4. Managing the website**

The website should ideally be managed by the Communication Unit of a department. The website manager should be responsible for planning, leading, organising activities, the overall information architecture and final quality assurance.



However, the information on your website should be the corporate responsibility of the whole of the department and form an integral part of the department's communication effort. All employees should realise that they must take ownership of the information on the website. It is recommended that content managers be appointed by different organisational units to take the responsibility for coordinating the relevant information for that unit. They should continuously identify new information for the website, validate the accuracy of the current information and provide updates to outdated content. The website manager, content managers or specialist writers should be responsible for writing new information or rewriting existing information for the website.

Other roles and responsibilities for the successful management and maintenance of a website include an information specialist (information architecture and optimal user interface), web author (uploading information on the website), web developer (developing dynamic components and applications), database developer (for developing database applications), graphical designer (responsible for visual impact and designing graphics) and webserver administrator. These roles could also be outsourced.

### **14.5. Maintaining the website**

A common mistake is to focus on the development of a website and to overlook the ongoing maintenance of the website. Users expect government information to be available online on its release. They lose confidence in a website that is not properly maintained, when new information is not added, when old information is not removed, or when a website remains static. In general, government websites contain rapidly changing information. Therefore, information has to be checked, modified, added to, updated and removed on a regular basis.

It should be determined upfront what information needs to be updated and how often it should be updated. Measures and procedures to ensure regular updates and ongoing improvements should be implemented.

General guidelines to ensure and demonstrate that your website is current include:

- The information on the website should be current and up to date. The most current information must be available.
- Any information released to the public in printed form should also be available on the website at the same time.
- Obsolete information should be removed from the website. Only information that is useful should be kept on the website. This does not mean that older information should not be available. The criterion should be that the information should still be valid.
- Remove or update broken links.

## CHAPTER 14



- The “What’s new” page/area on the website should be updated regularly, as many users may go to this section first and may not return to the website if this information is not updated. Each entry on this page should be dated to enable users to determine the currency thereof.
- The site map should be updated when new sections are added to the website.
- All documents, publications, speeches and media statements posted on the website should include a publishing or delivery date.

An important part of website maintenance is to ensure that interactive services are managed properly. Website users expect quick responses to requests for information. It is also good practice to thank users who provide feedback. If your website provides for a discussion group, it must be moderated and managed well.



# CHAPTER 15

## USEFUL LINKS

Useful links



**government  
communications**

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

## CHAPTER 15



### USEFUL LINKS

**Government site: [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za)**

The Government website links to the latest online directories (government and media) and also to several websites related to:

- government and politics
- Africa
- arts and culture
- business, finance and economy
- constitutional and legal affairs
- development
- education, training and skills development
- environment
- health
- housing
- human and social issues
- labour relations
- library and information services
- mining, minerals and energy
- news and media
- research, science and technology
- sport and recreation
- tourism and travel
- transport.

### **15.1. Search engines**

#### **15.1.1. International search engines**

- [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
- [www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com)
- [www.ask.com](http://www.ask.com)
- [www.dogpile.com](http://www.dogpile.com)
- [www.excite.com](http://www.excite.com)
- [www.hotbot.com](http://www.hotbot.com)



- [www.metacrawler.com](http://www.metacrawler.com)
- [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)
- [www.webcrawler.com](http://www.webcrawler.com)

### **15.1.2. South African search engines**

- [www.aardvark.co.za](http://www.aardvark.co.za)
- [www.ananzi.co.za](http://www.ananzi.co.za)
- [www.mweb.co.za](http://www.mweb.co.za)

### **15.2. Grammar and style**

- [www.bartleby.com](http://www.bartleby.com)

### **15.3. Dictionaries**

- [www.webster.com](http://www.webster.com)
- [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com)
- [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

### **15.4. Currency converter**

- [www.xe.net/ucc/](http://www.xe.net/ucc/)
- [www.oanda.com/convert/classic](http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic)

### **15.5. African digital library**

- [www.africandl.org.za](http://www.africandl.org.za)

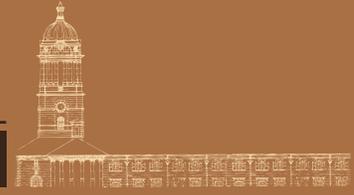
### **15.6. Online translation**

- <http://www.worldlingo.com/>

### **15.7. News sites**

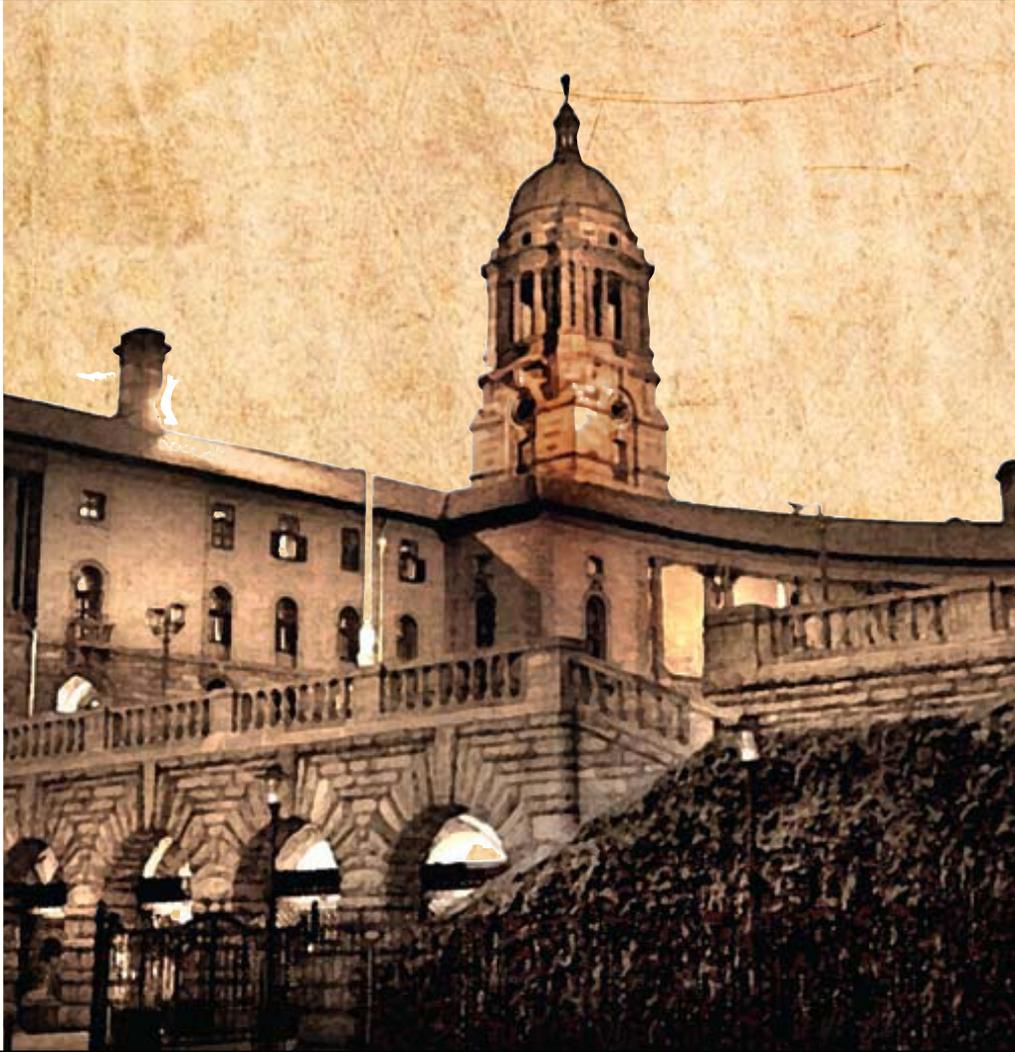
- [www.buanews.gov.za](http://www.buanews.gov.za)
- [www.ananzi.co.za](http://www.ananzi.co.za)
- [www.iafrica.com/news](http://www.iafrica.com/news)
- [www.iol.co.za](http://www.iol.co.za)
- [www.bday.co.za](http://www.bday.co.za)
- [www.news24.com](http://www.news24.com)
- [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)

## CHAPTER 15



- [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com)
- [www.time.com](http://www.time.com)
- [www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com)
- [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)
- [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
- [www.sapa.co.za](http://www.sapa.co.za)

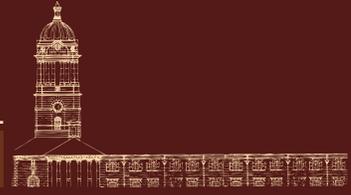
# APPENDICES



government  
communications

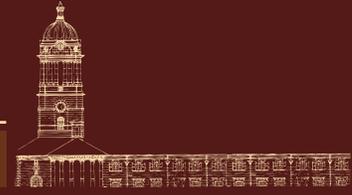
Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## LIST OF APPENDICES



### LIST OF APPENDICES

- 16.1. Government Communication Policy Guidelines  
(Policy Guideline Appendices available on the GCF website)
- 16.2. Generic Scorecard for Heads of Communication
- 16.3. *Editorial Style Guide*



## 16.1. Government Communication Policy Guidelines

# GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION POLICY GUIDELINES: Media, Marketing, Crisis & Local Government Policy Guidelines



<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>I. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4-5</b>
<b>2. MEDIA POLICY GUIDELINES</b>	<b>6-11</b>
2.1 Terms of reference	6
2.2 Authorised media spokespeople	6
2.3 Spokesperson's roles and responsibilities	6
2.4 The role of the Office of the Head of Communication (HoC)	7
2.5 Response and liaison standards for media enquiries	7
2.6 Media approaches to departmental employees	7
2.7 Televised or in-person speaking engagements by departmental employees	7
2.8 Inappropriate media engagement	7
2.9 Language requirements	8
2.10 Complaints about media coverage or behaviour	8
2.11 Off-the-record comments	8
2.12 Media monitoring	8
2.13 Appointment of external media relations support	8
2.14 Public disclosure and right to information	8-9
2.15 Electronic communication	9
2.16 Photographic and video coverage by media	9
2.17 Mandatory referral to Government Communications	9
2.18 General media advice and counsel	9
2.19 Media engagement tools	9-11
2.19.1 Quarterly media schedules	9
2.19.2 Media releases	10
2.19.3 Media conferences	10
2.19.4 Letters to the editor	10
2.19.5 Opinion pieces	11
2.19.6 Paid media coverage	11
2.19.7 Positioning papers	11
<b>3. MARKETING POLICY GUIDELINES</b>	<b>12-20</b>
3.1 Government communicators' toolkit	12
3.2 Content, language, tone and image of marketing campaigns	12-13
3.2.1 Content	12
3.2.2 Guidelines for visual and audio content	12
3.2.3 Core message development	12
3.2.4 Language requirements	12
3.2.5 Plain language	13
3.2.6 Corporate Identity and branding	13
3.2.7 Non-permissible use of departmental logo and word mark	13
3.3 Advertising and media bulk-buying	13-15
3.3.1 Campaign advertising	13
3.3.2 Non-campaign advertising	14
3.3.3 Advertising in emergency or crisis situations	14
3.3.4 Non-permissible advertising	14

<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
3.3.5 Authority for marketing campaigns	14
3.3.6 Limited bidding procedure: Panel of Advertising/PR Agencies	14-15
3.3.7 Media bulk-buying	15
3.3.8 Government advertising during an election period	15
3.3.9 Permissible marketing activities during a closed or "quarantine" period	15
3.3.10 Third-party marketing endorsements	15
3.4 Public relations	16
3.4.1 Events	16
3.4.2 Exhibitions and trade shows	16
3.4.3 South African-based exhibitions and trade shows	16
3.4.4 International exhibitions and trade shows	16
3.5 Sponsorship guidelines	16-18
3.5.1 Government as a sponsor	17
3.5.2 Private sector and international donor-sponsored projects	17
3.5.3 Sponsorship guiding principles	17
3.6 Direct marketing and distribution	18
3.6.1 Bulk distribution	18
3.7. Publications	18-19
3.7.1 Responsibility of heads of communication	18
3.7.2 Publication strategy	18
3.7.3 Publication on the Internet	19
3.8 Digital marketing	19
3.8.1 The introduction or increased use of digital marketing	19
3.9 Departmental websites	19
3.10 Third-party advertising and references on websites	20
3.11 Social media protocols	20
<b>4. CRISIS POLICY GUIDELINES</b>	<b>21-4</b>
4.1 Background	21
4.2 Crisis communication policy guidelines on potential tier one issues	21
4.3 Crisis prevention	21
4.4 Crisis reaction	21
4.5 Crisis spokespeople	22
4.6 Working with the media	22
4.7 Recording media enquiries	22
4.8 Communication approval processes	23
4.9 Employee communication	23
4.10 Integrity of communication	23
4.11 Informing other government stakeholders	23
4.12 Stakeholder communication response times	23
4.13 Identification of relevant stakeholders	23
4.14 Next-of-kin and victim communication	23-24
4.15 Interdepartmental and multi-agency communication	24
4.16 Media monitoring	24
6.17 Evaluation and follow-up	24
4.18 Updating of stakeholder lists	24

<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION POLICY GUIDELINES</b>	<b>25-28</b>
5.1 The aim of the policy guidelines	25
5.2 Objectives of policy guidelines	25
5.3 Communication functions of municipalities	25
5.4 The role of local government communication in public participation	25
5.5 Capacity-building at the local sphere of government	26
5.6 Induction programme for municipal communicators and political principals	26
5.7 Development of a municipal communication strategy	26
5.8 Institutional communication arrangements	26
5.9 Provincial and local government communication forums	27
5.9.1 Provincial Communication Forum	27
5.10 District Communication Forum	27
5.10.1 Roles and functions of the District Communication Forum	27
5.11 Local Communication Forum	27
<b>6. REFERENCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>29-30</b>
<b>7. DOCUMENT ACCEPTANCE AND RELEASE NOTICE</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>8. BREACH OF POLICY GUIDELINES</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>9. SUPPORTING POLICY</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>10. OTHER RELEVANT GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES</b>	<b>31</b>

## **I. Introduction**

The policy guidelines presented here are aimed at meeting the requirement of Recommendation I of the Review of the Government Communication and Information System conducted in 2008.

The guidelines provide direction to national, provincial and local structures regarding the basic requirements of communication within their institutions, and set basic standards for effective government communication. The guidelines address the critical areas identified by the review. They are not intended to be exhaustive, rather it is intended that the guidelines be updated as and when the need arises.

### **I.1. HISTORY AND BACKGROUND**

Government's mandate requires that its communication should enhance access to information that enables the public to participate in the country's transformation and in bettering their own lives; that it should bring the realities of our emergent and thriving democracy to the attention of the international community; and promote the renaissance of Africa, including regional integration and implementation of people-centred development programmes.

While the means of achieving the mandate for government communication have evolved over the past 15 years, the core vision remains the same: to achieve integrated, coordinated and coherent communication between government and the South African public to enable citizens to participate in the country's transformation.

The GCIS, in its 10th year of existence (1998), deemed it necessary to engage in a review of the government-wide communication system to enhance effectiveness of the GCIS and government communication as a whole.

The review included a focus on the GCIS as a critical role player in the government communication system and assessed processes, structures and systems towards strategising, integrating and coordinating government communication to enhance overall cooperation, partnerships and effectiveness. The focus included the government-wide communication system, with particular reference to the national and provincial spheres of government, not neglecting the local sphere.

Various recommendations are made from the review to strengthen government communication in South Africa. These are explored in detail in the review report, which should be read in conjunction with this document.

A recommendation emanating from the GCIS's external reference team upon presentation of the results concerned the disjointedness of communication within government. It was thought that the time had come for the GCIS to clearly articulate to the rest of government and to the public what the role of communication is and what could be expected from this profession in the Public Service.

Addressing the first recommendation from the review, the GCIS developed overarching policy guidelines for media, marketing, crisis and local government communication management in government. This document serves as the first attempt by the GCIS to provide guidelines towards standardising and professionalising communication across government. The guidelines focus on aspects of major importance in government communication – media, marketing, crisis and local government. These guidelines will be updated from time to time, working towards improving effective government communication.

Other recommendations of the report have led to, among other things:

- an induction programme of government communicators and ongoing training, including and especially a qualification for government communicators
- recognising the need to build better capacity at the GCIS to provide better quality advice and strategic direction
- professionalising government communication through developing a generic performance scorecard for heads of communication
- strategic planning of communication forums to focus on key communication priorities, profiling the forums as instruments to strengthen the government-wide communication system
- developing a systematic process for evidence of how all the forums implement their communication plans and the resultant impact.

Given the GCIS mandate (including the revised vision and mission), the organisation provides a variety of services and have various communication platforms available over and above its strategic leadership role within the communication system. These services outlined below, are aimed at aiding the implementation of the draft government communication policy guidelines within the government-wide communication system.

**Services:**

The GCIS's services include:

- Advertising and media placement
- Briefing the media
- Communication research
- Corporate Identity management
- Design and exhibitions
- Producing directories (database of contact information and profiles)
- Distributing government statements and documents
- Distribution services
- Event management
- Information enquiries
- Marketing strategies
- Media monitoring
- Photographic services
- Radio production
- Training services
- Video production
- Editing and translation services
- Website support
- Support in implementing local communication campaigns through provincial and district offices of the GCIS including advice on development communication.
- Local liaison service

**Platforms:**

The GCIS's platforms include:

- *Vukuzenzele*
- *Bua Magazine*
- *Bua News*
- *Izimbizo*
- *South Africa Yearbook*, including an interactive CD-Rom
- *Pocket Guide to South Africa*.
- Thusong Service Centres

## **2. Media Policy Guidelines**

### **2.1 Terms of reference**

This policy guidelines covers ALL communication to the news media, including news releases, media advisories, formal statements, interviews, press conferences and briefings, letters to the editor, opinion pieces ("op eds"), technical announcements and other information or material given to news media representatives.

News media representatives refer to a collective term that includes, but is not limited to, reporters, editors, writers and researchers for newspapers, magazines, scientific journals and trade publications; radio or television stations or networks and online news services; bloggers and any other electronic or print media related to news distribution that could serve as an information outlet.

The communication policy guidelines apply to public-speaking engagements and written articles where it might be expected that the publication or circulation of the comments will spread to the community at large. They apply equally to all government employees, across all departments and geographic locations.

It is the responsibility of the heads of communication (HoCs) in each department/province to ensure that the communication staff is informed and fully aware of these media policy guidelines.

### **2.2 Authorised media spokespeople**

- 2.2.1 Only officials authorised by the minister, the Director-General (DG) and the HoC for the department may represent the department to the media and serve as an authorised point of contact with the media.
- 2.2.2 Any media communication representing an employee's personal opinion as a private citizen, not associated with the department/province, does not require any approval. These opinions must subscribe to the Public Service Act, 1994 and the Code of Conduct for Public Servants, and must not use information acquired while on duty to voice personal opinions.
- 2.2.3 The HoC or his/her designate can in consultation with the minister, deputy minister or DG identify a spokesperson for the department on a case-by-case basis. The HoC may at any time give or withdraw such authorisation for a designated staff member to initiate or respond to media contact.
- 2.2.4 All designated departmental spokespersons must have attended an approved media training session presented by the Office of the HoC, or the GCIS, or their designated agents, before they are permitted to represent the department/province as a media spokesperson. Exceptions to media training requirements must be approved by the Office of the HoC or the GCIS.
- 2.2.5 The Office of the HoC must hold an up-to-date list of all departmental staff who have received appropriate media training.
- 2.2.6 This policy does not restrict the right of elected staff-side representatives of recognised trade unions or staff associations to express their views through or to the media directly. Elected staff-side representatives of recognised trade unions or staff associates are fully entitled to make comments on behalf of their staff associations or trade unions. They are not permitted to comment on behalf of, or represent, the department.

### **2.3 Spokesperson's roles and responsibilities**

- 2.3.1 The minister, deputy minister, the DG, the minister's designated official spokesperson and the HoC (if not the official ministerial spokesperson) are the delegated official spokespeople for the department on all matters that may have an impact on the image of the department.
- 2.3.2 The minister and deputy minister and his/her official spokesperson speak on any issue within their department, with a focus on departmental strategy, policy and performance.
- 2.3.3 Media enquiries relating to the department should first be raised with the department's HoC, before comment is provided to the media.
- 2.3.4 On technical or complex matters, subject-matter experts may be authorised by the minister and the HoC to provide clarity.

## **2.4 The role of the Office of the Head of Communication**

- 2.4.1 The media interactions for which the Office of the HoC are responsible include but are not limited to:
  - 2.4.1.1 identifying authorised spokespeople within the department, and equipping them with the skills and information to present the thinking, decisions and actions of the department to the media
  - 2.4.1.2 coordinating, editing and distributing all official media releases and statements that reflect the standing of the department to the media
  - 2.4.1.3 responding to and coordinating the response to media enquiries
  - 2.4.1.4 scheduling and managing all official departmental news conferences and media events
  - 2.4.1.5 coordinating and implementing the communication response to a reputation crisis.

## **2.5 Response and liaison standards for media enquiries**

- 2.5.1 The department should recognise the deadline constraints facing the media and must endeavour to provide open and equal access to all news media.
- 2.5.2 All media queries should preferably be acknowledged within two hours and no later than 24 hours for daily and weekly print and broadcast media. Submission times for the actual provision of content to address a media enquiry should be mutually agreed on with the reporter concerned, but with due regard for the guiding principles of transparency, accuracy and efficiency of the departmental response.
- 2.5.3 Designated departmental spokespeople should make their mobile phone numbers available to the media. They must further ensure that their mailboxes have sufficient memory for media messages on a day-to-day basis and that the content and tone of their voicemail message serve to build and sustain the professional image of their department and the Office of the HoC.

## **2.6 Media approaches to departmental employees**

- 2.6.1 All requests received by a department's employee for a media interview must be referred to the Office of the HoC immediately.
- 2.6.2 Any media enquiry to a departmental employee who is not authorised to speak to the media or who is not authorised to speak on the subject of the media enquiry, should immediately be redirected to the Office of the HoC.

## **2.7 Televised or in-person speaking engagements by departmental employees**

- 2.7.1 Any departmental employee who accepts a public speaking engagement representing the department will notify the office of the HoC. The HoC will provide guidance on the approach and whether the platform will be beneficial to the department.

## **2.8 Inappropriate media engagement**

- 2.8.1 No spokesperson or employee will divulge to the media any findings or determinations in relation to departmental internal enquiries, reviews or investigations, irrespective as to whether such processes are ongoing or considered concluded, unless there is specific approval by the minister or the HoC.
- 2.8.2 This policy explicitly regards it as irresponsible of staff members to engage with the media in any activity or comment, which is designed to:
  - 2.8.2.1 bring the department or its stakeholders into disrepute
  - 2.8.2.2 undermine the integrity and reputation of the department, its leadership or its stakeholders
  - 2.8.2.3 present a personal viewpoint as a position which is held by the department
  - 2.8.2.4 disclose departmental information without proper authority
  - 2.8.2.5 comment on pending or current legal issues relating to the department.

## **2.9 Language requirements**

- 2.9.1 All media releases and other written media interventions should be produced and distributed in English. If the media requests a copy of the issued communication in any other of the 11 official languages, the Office of the HoC will take responsibility for the professional translation of the communication and negotiate a mutually agreed deadline for this translation with the media house concerned.
- 2.9.2 All communication issued to the media should be presented in plain language, without detracting from the accuracy of the message, and should be presented in a way that is understood by the target audience.

## **2.10 Complaints about media coverage or behaviour**

- 2.10.1 Any complaints from within a department regarding the performance of the media, for example the content and/or tone of media coverage, or the behaviour of a reporter in their dealings with the department, will be made to the Office of the HoC.
- 2.10.2 The Office of the HoC will be responsible for deciding what, if any, action will be taken in response to such a complaint.

## **2.11 Off-the-record comments**

- 2.11.1 No employee of the department will speak to the media "off the record". The only exception is the HoC or his/her nominee who, in certain circumstances, may be required to do so.

## **2.12 Media monitoring**

- 2.12.1 The Office of the HoC may negotiate their own media monitoring contracts with external service-providers, from an approved list of agencies maintained by the GCIS.
- 2.12.2 The procurement and appointment of external service-providers will be done in accordance with government procurement processes.
- 2.12.3 The Office of the HoC in each department must monitor and evaluate the quantitative and qualitative performance of the earned media coverage achieved at least every six months, using the coverage and data received from the media-monitoring supplier.
- 2.12.4 The GCIS can supply departments with a template for assessing media measurement and performance, if required.

## **2.13 Appointment of external media relations support**

- 2.13.1 Departments may – if required – negotiate with and appoint an external public relations/media relations company or other specialist communication support from the GCIS database of qualified and approved suppliers to assist the department with its reputation management functions.
- 2.13.2 The procurement and appointment of external service-providers will be in accordance with government procurement processes.
- 2.13.3 It is recommended that a representative from the GCIS forms part of the final selection panel for the appointment of any such service-providers.
- 2.13.4 GCIS must be informed of the preferred bidder for such Public Relations (PR) and media relations services prior to the appointment of such a service-provider.

## **2.14 Public disclosure and right to information**

- 2.14.1 The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000), provides for requests addressed to the department by members of the media to be directed to the Office of the HoC immediately for consideration.
- 2.14.2 If the department receives a Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 request from the media in writing, it should be time-stamped to record the date of receipt. When a verbal request is presented to the department by

the media, it should be documented in writing, and the requesting party will, whenever possible, be required by the Office of the HoC to sign the documentation, which will then be time-stamped.

- 2.14.3 If a representative of the media asks the department for information that is already a matter of public record, the department should make such information available to the media representative within a mutually agreed time frame. Withholding such information will only force the media representative to develop other sources.
- 2.14.4 Requests from non-media sources for information under the Access to Information Act, 2000 should be directed to the department's Chief Information Officer.
- 2.14.5 The Office of the HoC should be informed of all requests for information under the Access to Information Act 2000; as such information may find itself in the public domain and have implications for future media coverage relating to the department.

## **2.15 Electronic communication**

- 2.15.1 All e-mail correspondence to the media, whether intended for publication or as a private note to the recipient, should be written in such a way that the correspondence would not bring the department into disrepute if published by the media.
- 2.15.2 The tone, content and standard of language (grammar, spelling, etc.) of electronic correspondence with members of the media should thus always be constructed from a perspective that the correspondence may find its way into the public domain.
- 2.15.3 Any weblog ("blog") or presence on a social media site (e.g. Facebook) that identifies the author as an employee of the department, and/or refers to activities and policies of the department, must be sent to the Office of the HoC for approval before it is published on the worldwide web.

## **2.16 Photographic and video coverage by media**

- 2.16.1 Media photography or videography is expressly prohibited on departmental property without the prior approval of the HoC or his/her nominee.
- 2.16.2 If authorised by the Office of the HoC, media representatives may be allowed inside departmental facilities under supervision by a representative of the Office of the HoC for the purposes of photographic and/or video filming required for recording interviews, documentaries, news releases or other departmental approved applications.

## **2.17 Mandatory referral to Government Communications**

- 2.17.1 GCIS must be notified of all potentially sensitive, contentious or controversial media enquiries with respect to a department's activities.

## **2.18 General media advice and counsel**

- 2.18.1 The GCIS can provide advice on all aspects of media relations and assist departments with the preparation of strategic approaches to media relations.

## **2.19 Media engagement tools**

### **2.19.1 Quarterly media schedules**

- 2.19.1.1 Targeted media for a specific media intervention should be carefully selected based on the news value of the release for their profile of readers/viewers/listeners.
- 2.19.1.2 The Office of the HoC accordingly designs and implements proactive media relation activities according to a comprehensive media relations schedule.
- 2.19.1.3 The media schedule will, among other things, identify target media for the media engagement; the planned media intervention to be used, e.g. a media release, event or interview; and the qualitative and quantitative outcome of the media intervention.
- 2.19.1.4 A comprehensive database of media contacts is maintained by the GCIS, and any enquiries regarding prospective

media targets or current media contact details should be directed to Media Liaison at the GCIS.

- 2.19.1.5 The Office of the HoC should furnish the GCIS with a copy of the department's quarterly media schedule four times per year; at least 14 days ahead of the start of the implementation of the media engagement programme for the quarter:
- 2.19.1.6 It is recognised that day-to-day reactive media enquiries cannot necessarily be planned and will fall outside the scope of the planned quarterly media schedule. However, response to particular issues must also be shared with the GCIS for information and advice where necessary.

### **2.19.2 Media releases**

- 2.19.2.1 All media statements will be approved in writing by the HoC, his/her nominee or, if appropriate, the DG or minister prior to the statement being issued to the media.
- 2.19.2.2 A signed copy of the approved media release/statement should be kept on file by the Office of the HoC.
- 2.19.2.3 A copy of all approved media releases issued by departments must be forwarded to newsfiles@gcis.gov.za at the GCIS when they are released, together with the media distribution list of the media release.
- 2.19.2.4 A copy of the media release will be posted on the department's website immediately after its release to targeted media.
- 2.19.2.5 All media releases issued by the department must be on department-branded stationery and conform to the approved government Corporate Identity standards and format for media releases. The GCIS is the authorised custodian of such Corporate Identity standards and format.
- 2.19.2.6 All media releases should include the name and contact details of an authorised departmental spokesperson, or a department communication specialist who can direct media enquiries to the authorised spokesperson.
- 2.19.2.7 The contact person identified on the media release must make himself/herself available to receive media enquiries following the distribution of the media release.
- 2.19.2.8 All requests to have a media release written and distributed to the media about a departmental event, programme or achievement, should be directed to the Office of the HoC.
- 2.19.2.9 The HoC or his/her nominee is empowered to make the final decision regarding the newsworthiness of a potential media release and whether it should be distributed to the media or not.
- 2.19.2.10 All media releases that refer to a campaign partner organisation will not be issued by the department until the approval of the content has been confirmed with the communication department or nominated approval party of the campaign partner.
- 2.19.2.11 The department issues joint press releases with non-commercial organisations only.
- 2.19.2.12 The Office of the HoC monitors media coverage of the media release.

### **2.19.3 Media conferences**

- 2.19.3.1 All requests to arrange a media conference under the auspices of the department should be submitted to the Office of the HoC within a reasonable period and at least five working days in advance of the planned media conference – unless the media conference is in response to an unplanned and rapidly emerging issue or reputation crisis.
- 2.19.3.2 There are different kinds of media conferences ranging from (1) background, (2) off the record, (3) non attributable and (4) open press conferences. The office of the HoC will upon receiving a request for a media conference, decide and advice on an approach to be taken.
- 2.19.3.3 Media conferences should be authorised by the Minister, Deputy Minister or Director General and should be arranged through the office of the HoC.
- 2.19.3.4 Media conferences are only warranted in highly newsworthy circumstances and the HoC is empowered to determine whether the circumstances warrant a media conference or whether other media engagement channels will be more effective in communicating with the media.
- 2.19.3.5 Guidelines for the organisation and delivery of media conferences are presented under the Resource Section of these policy guidelines as **Appendix I**.
- 2.19.3.6 The HoC or a designated official from the Office of the HoC should chair any press conference or briefing. The HoC should advice the department and journalists about the nature of the conference or briefing including advantages and disadvantages.

#### **2.19.4 Letters to the editor**

- 2.19.4.1 Any letter to the editor of a print or online publication, identifying the writer as an employee of the department, must be sent to the Office of the HoC for approval before it is submitted to the intended media outlet. Only approved letters to the editor may be sent to the media by departmental employees.

#### **2.19.5 Opinion pieces**

- 2.19.5.1 Any opinion piece identifying the writer as an employee of the department must be sent to the Office of the HoC for approval **before** it is submitted to the intended media outlet. Only approved opinion pieces may be sent to the media.
- 2.19.5.2 These communication pieces may require further approval at departmental level, and sufficient advance planning and coordination time is required.

#### **2.19.6 Paid media coverage**

- 2.19.6.1 Government departments should not pay the media for any form of editorial coverage. Our policy is to achieve reputation-enhancing, earned media coverage through the newsworthiness of our activities and announcements.
- 2.19.6.2 The Office of the HoC should apply its professional discretion to leverage editorial opportunities, where possible, in media that features on the department's advertising schedule.

#### **2.19.7 Positioning papers**

- 2.19.7.1 The Office of the HoC may, with the assistance of appointed and recognised specialists, prepare positioning papers on topical issues relating to the department. Such positioning papers serve as reference documents for media and other enquiries, and ensure consistent, integrated messaging to the media.
- 2.19.7.2 The Office of the HoC will circulate approved positioning papers to authorised spokespeople within the department within 24 hours of final approval processes.

### **3. Marketing Policy Guidelines**

#### **3.1 Government communicators' toolkit**

These policy guidelines do not address the entire menu of promotional tools in a marketer's toolkit, such as sales and sales promotion, packaging, merchandising and word-of-mouth marketing.

The focus of these policy guidelines is on marketing tools that constitute the bulk of the government communicators' toolkit, namely:

- a) content, language, tone and images
- b) advertising and media bulk-buying
- c) public relations (including events, exhibitions and promotional items)
- d) distribution and direct marketing
- e) digital marketing
- f) Corporate Identity
- g) sponsorship.

#### **3.2 Content, language, tone and image of marketing campaigns**

##### **3.2.1 Content**

- 3.2.1.1 Departments must ensure that the content of marketing campaigns is consistent with government policy, and the design and presentation reflect positively and professionally on the department and government as a whole.
- 3.2.1.2 Information should be based on accurate and verifiable facts. No claim or statement should be made which cannot be substantiated.

##### **3.2.2 Guidelines for visual and audio content**

- 3.2.2.1 Images used in campaign advertising should serve to articulate the vision of a people-centred government, working towards the upliftment of all.
- 3.2.2.2 Images that reflect service in action, with a strong focus on people, should be used to articulate government's vision of both people-centredness and progress.
- 3.2.2.3 Departments should avoid the use of images of political and other principals in campaign advertising as such images are not consistent with the "people-centred" proposition that government wishes to convey in its marketing and communication.

##### **3.2.3 Core message development**

- 3.2.3.1 The focus of government's marketing campaigns should be on messages that enable the public to participate in democracy and improve their lives.
- 3.2.3.2 Every department will have some department-specific core messaging that will depend on the particular campaign objectives and audiences. This should address one or more of the following objectives to warrant the marketing campaign:
  - a) promote behaviour or attitudes that are generally regarded as being in the public interest, i.e. that will lead to improved public health and safety or quality of life
  - b) promote public awareness and compliance with legislation
  - c) raise awareness of government services available to the public or target audience
  - d) encourage public use of government products and services
  - e) promote public awareness of rights, responsibilities, duties or entitlements
  - f) encourage public involvement in government decision-making
  - g) inform the public of new, existing or revised government policies, programmes, initiatives or events
  - h) promote public well-being, safety and order in the event of a crisis or emergency
  - i) report on government performance in service delivery to facilitate accountability to the public
  - j) encourage community pride, spirit, tolerance or assist in the achievement of a widely supported public policy outcome
  - k) recruit staff, publish important statutory information and promote business opportunities with the department concerned.

##### **3.2.4 Language requirements**

- 3.2.4.1 The Languages Bill is aimed at promoting the equitable use of the 11 official languages to facilitate equitable access to government services, knowledge and information, as well as respect for language rights.

- 3.2.4.2 Communicators across government should become familiar with the provisions of the Languages Bill and ensure that there is a gradual progression towards implementation in their department.
- 3.2.4.3 All marketing communication should consider the preferred official language of the target audience.
- 3.2.4.4 Presentation in the 11 official languages as well as in Braille and audio formats should be considered where applicable so as to facilitate accessibility for all language groups and people with disabilities.
- 3.2.4.5 As a general rule, all media-based advertising campaigns should be presented in the language used by the specific media vehicle, e.g. the TV or radio station, magazine or newspaper.

### **3.2.5 Plain language<sup>1</sup>**

- 3.2.5.1 All marketing communication must be presented in plain, clear language to facilitate understanding and improve communication. This implies that communication documents should be presented in a manner that reflects the following:
  - a) economic use of words at a level that the audience can understand
  - b) tight sentence structure
  - c) a welcoming and direct tone
  - d) visually appealing design
  - e) an easy-to-read document.

### **3.2.6 Corporate Identity and branding**

- 3.2.6.1 All spheres of government should note that the Coat of Arms National Corporate Identity Guidelines regulate the use of the Coat of Arms as branding for government. The guidelines limit the use of the Coat of Arms, to further protect it from commercial exploitation and abuse.
- 3.2.6.2 The GCIS is the authorised custodian of government's Corporate Identity and has delegated this authority to the office of the departmental HoC for departmental marketing activities.
- 3.2.6.3 The application of the government brand should be in line with the Corporate Identity Manual for Government, which was developed by the GCIS and is accessible online at the <http://www.gcis.gov.za> (included as **Appendix 2** of the policy guidelines).
- 3.2.6.4 All departments should comply with the instructions in the manual to ensure standardisation of communication to departmental stakeholders.
- 3.2.6.5 The inappropriate or unauthorised use of the department's corporate visual identity will be regarded as a breach of this policy.
- 3.2.6.6 Any piece of print or digital communication that is produced for the first time as a new design and that carries the department's logo and/or word mark must receive written approval from the Office of the HoC before it may be published or distributed in any format.

### **3.2.7 Non-permissible use of departmental logo and word mark**

- 3.2.7.1 The use of department stationery or business cards other than for bona fide department business is prohibited.
- 3.2.7.2 The use of departmental stationery or business cards or other official department trademarks or documents to further an individual's private business interests or to express political or personal viewpoints is expressly forbidden.

## **3.3 Advertising and media bulk-buying**

These advertising policy guidelines apply specifically to campaign advertising.

### **3.3.1 Campaign advertising**

- 3.3.1.1 Campaign advertising by a government department should be aimed at educating or informing the public regarding the department's services, products, programmes or policies.
- 3.3.1.2 Departments should only undertake campaign advertising if there is a legitimate public benefit in doing so, or if specific information is required by the public, which is best communicated through advertising.
- 3.3.1.3 Departments must plan advertising campaigns proactively at the beginning of the annual government communication cycle when departmental communication strategies are due. Funding must then be allocated to advertising and confirmed with the GCIS. It is important to ensure that before considering advertising a campaign, it is warranted according to the checklist outlined in **Section 3.2.3.2** of these policy guidelines.

<sup>1</sup> A guide to plain language writing - Appendix 2

### **3.3.2 Non-campaign advertising**

- 3.3.2.1 The design and layout of non-campaign advertising must adhere to the department's guidelines for layout style, size limits, type faces, type size, use of departmental branding, etc.
- 3.3.2.2 Non-campaign advertising should be short-term advertising that usually appears only once or twice in the media and is not tied to an ongoing or substantial budget or marketing campaign.
- 3.3.2.3 Non-campaign advertising is generally limited to tenders, statutory public notices, auction notices, recruitment advertising, invitations to make submissions and similar print advertising.

### **3.3.3 Advertising in emergency or crisis situations**

- 3.3.3.1 Departments may decide that advertising is required to communicate information to the general public or specific target audiences in an emergency or crisis situation.
- 3.3.3.2 Proposals to advertise during a crisis or emergency should be directed to the Chief Director: Communication Service Agency (CSA) at GCIS any time such a contingency may arise.

### **3.3.4 Non-permissible advertising**

- 3.3.4.1 Departments should avoid misuse of public funds for advertising campaigns. Public funds should not be used for departmental advertising where:
  - a) the method or medium of advertising is excessive or extravagant in relation to the objective being pursued
  - b) a reasonable person could interpret the message as promoting a political party, or communicating on behalf of a political party
  - c) the party in government is mentioned by name in the advertising campaign
  - d) party-political slogans or images are used in the advertising
  - e) references are made to political party websites, publications or other material
  - f) a political party or other grouping is being disparaged or held up to ridicule
  - g) members of the department are depicted in a manner that a reasonable person would regard as excessive or gratuitous
  - h) the advertising creates a perception that a campaign promotes an individual, like a minister
  - i) there is no clear line of accountability, appropriate audit procedures or GCIS-approved procurement process for the communication process.
- 3.3.4.2 Departments may not place advertising in a publication, or on a channel or station that does not have an industry recognised independently audited circulation or audience figure, without written approval from the GCIS.

### **3.3.5 Authority for marketing campaigns**

- 3.3.5.1 The HoC or his/her designated nominee is responsible for the implementation of marketing and advertising strategies at departmental level.
- 3.3.5.2 All departmental marketing campaigns must be based on an approved marketing strategy. Officials on the level of at least HoC will be responsible for approving all marketing strategies for departmental campaigns.
- 3.3.5.3 For the commissioning of advertising and public relations services, the GCIS, as custodian of media bulk-buying, will use its delegation for the procurement of media space and time, and advise departments on the appointment of suitable agencies from the GCIS database.
- 3.3.5.4 A copy of the approved campaign marketing strategy must be submitted to the GCIS at least 10 working days prior to the planned implementation for multimedia advertising campaigns exceeding R1 million, and at least two working days for standard advertising campaigns.
- 3.3.5.5 A department must not commit itself to any costs or obligations in terms of the proposed campaign until it has received written approval of the marketing strategy from the GCIS.
- 3.3.5.6 The GCIS does not prescribe a format for a marketing strategy, but the minimum requirements are that it should cover the content areas outlined in **Appendix 3** of these policy guidelines.
- 3.3.5.7 The right of final approval for media placement and campaign content rests with the GCIS, which will take all aspects addressed in these policy guidelines into careful consideration when assessing the suitability of departmental marketing campaigns for implementation.
- 3.3.5.8 It is an unacceptable practice to split or vary a particular procurement need into smaller procurement bundles as part of the same advertising campaign in order to circumvent the monetary threshold requirements of this policy.

### **3.3.6 Limited bidding procedure: Panel of Advertising/PR Agencies**

- 3.3.6.1 In instances where the value of the campaign exceeds R500 000, departments are required to consider making use of the GCIS Panel of Advertising/PR Agencies. The panel was established in 1998 after being endorsed by Cabinet,

and is ideally updated quarterly and reviewed annually, to fast-track procurement for campaigns that exceed a certain budget. The panel consists of a list of agencies, appointed after a pre-screening process.

a) After approval of the task directive, a shortened bid period (14 days) is linked to the panel for campaigns that require a faster turnaround time. The evaluation process takes three to four weeks to finalise. The process to be followed in the selection and procurement of marketing service-providers is presented in more detail in **Appendix 4**.

3.3.6.2 However, if it is a multimedia campaign, a full media strategy, plan and schedule is required (including projected reach and frequency) to provide the rationale for the media selections proposed.

### **3.3.7 Media bulk-buying**

3.3.7.1 With the wealth of communication choices available to reach any given target market, it is essential that the media planner is involved in the campaign development process from the start. The overall team will consist of four principals, namely: departmental HoCs, GCIS, creative agency/creative source and the media planning and buying agency. Interaction between these four principals is critical to ensure that there are no scope creeps.

3.3.7.2 When buying space in the media for promoting departmental activities and programmes, it should be remembered that public funds are being dealt with and it should therefore be ensured that the money spent is justified by predetermined outcomes. Process steps to be followed when buying media space are described in **Appendix 5**.

### **3.3.8 Government advertising during an election period**

3.3.8.1 According to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), an election period is the period during which the IEC's Code of Conduct and the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa's regulations apply.

3.3.8.2 This period is determined once the date for the election has been announced, party lists are submitted and participating parties and candidates confirmed. The period ends when election results are certified and announced.

3.3.8.3 According to the regulations, state-financed media will not be used during an election period for the purpose of promoting or prejudicing the interests of any political party.

a) State-financed media means any newspaper, book, periodical, pamphlet, poster, media release or other printed matter, statement, or any audio and video material, or any information in electronic format such as CD-Roms, Internet or e-mail, which is produced and disseminated to the public, and which is financed by, and directly under the control of government. Examples of state-financed media include internal and external government newsletters and magazines.

3.3.8.4 These regulations apply only to communicators and other relevant public servants. Ministers, deputy ministers, premiers, MECs and all political representatives, contractual workers and employees in role-playing posts in government are regulated by the *Ministerial Handbook*.

### **3.3.9 Permissible marketing activities during a closed or "quarantine" period**

3.3.9.1 Publicity and advertising are legitimate forms of government and parliamentary spending; communication campaigns that inform people of their rights and obligations do not need to stop.

3.3.9.2 Departments may legitimately use public funds for information programmes or education campaigns to explain government policies, programmes or services and to inform members of the public of their obligations, rights and entitlements.

3.3.9.3 Marketing material produced and issued by a department during the election period must be drafted with a critical appreciation of the scrutiny given at such time to the activities of government, its departments and its employees.

3.3.9.4 In the run-up to an election, departments should particularly consider whether any of their communication campaigns or advertising could be perceived as promoting a specific political party, policy or candidate.

3.3.9.5 The GCIS can provide advice and counsel to departments on pre-election marketing activities.

a) Such advice and counsel will not constitute approval or clearance of material for compliance with legislation or guidelines: in all cases the obligation to comply with legislation will belong to the department and its HoC.

### **3.3.10 Third-party marketing endorsements**

3.3.10.1 In conducting campaign advertising, departments must avoid the appearance or public perception of endorsing or providing an unfair marketing advantage to any person, organisation or entity outside of government.

3.3.10.2 Departments must not advertise or publicly endorse the products or services they purchase or obtain from the private sector under contract.

### **3.4 Public relations<sup>2</sup>**

It is important to succinctly raise awareness of PR tools that extend beyond the traditional media relations interventions (which are comprehensively covered in this document in the Media Policy Guidelines section). Actual implementation of a particular tactic depends on campaign objectives, the characteristics of the target audience and the budget.

#### **3.4.1 Events**

- 3.4.1.1 The organiser of a newsworthy departmental event or function is encouraged to submit notice of such events to the GCIS's *Diary of Government Activity*, which is managed by the GCIS Communication Centre (shadib@gcis.gov.za).
- 3.4.1.2 Inclusion in the *Diary of Government Activity* helps promote and publicise the event and ensures that major events do not clash with other major events on the *Government Calendar*.
- 3.4.1.3 If an event is postponed or cancelled, it is the responsibility of the organising authority of the event to timeously remove it from the calendar.
- 3.4.1.4 The procurement of all suppliers for an event (e.g. catering, sound systems, décor, entertainment, etc.) should be in accordance with government procurement policies.

#### **3.4.2 Exhibitions and trade shows**

- 3.4.2.1 At the beginning of the annual communication cycle, departments must provide the GCIS with an indication of which trade shows and expos they intend to participate in during the 12 months ahead.
- 3.4.2.2 Where a number of departments are represented at the same show or exhibition, there must be a unified presence that promotes common themes and messages of the South African Government. Participating departments should identify a lead department as co-coordinator.
- 3.4.2.3 Exhibits and display material must comply with the department's corporate identity standards, and be of the highest possible standard in terms of format and presentation.
- 3.4.2.4 Agencies must ensure that any external service-providers used in the development or execution of shows and exhibitions are procured in accordance with government procurement policy, and from the GCIS' list of approved marketing-services suppliers.

#### **3.4.3 South African-based exhibitions and trade shows**

- 3.4.3.1 Departmental participation in a South African-based exhibition or trade show is at the discretion of the HoC.
- 3.4.3.2 Any department official wanting to officially participate in a South African-based industrial trade show or exhibition must direct such a request in writing to the Office of the HoC.
- 3.4.3.3 If the request is approved, the Office of the HoC is responsible for ensuring that the stand design and execution conform to departmental corporate identity and quality standards.
- 3.4.3.4 Budgeting for all exhibition elements at South African-based trade shows and exhibitions is the responsibility of the line component (applicant), and not the Office of the HoC.

#### **3.4.4 International exhibitions and trade shows**

- 3.4.4.1 The GCIS is responsible for evaluating and approving departmental participation in all international trade shows and exhibitions.
- 3.4.4.2 Departments wanting to officially participate in international trade shows or exhibitions must direct requests in writing to the Directorate: Marketing of the GCIS at least six months before the opening date of the trade show or exhibition.
- 3.4.4.3 If the request is approved, the Office of the HoC is responsible for ensuring that the stand design and execution conform to departmental Corporate Identity and quality standards.
- 3.4.4.4 Budgeting for all exhibition elements is the responsibility of the department (applicant), and not GCIS.

### **3.5 Sponsorship guidelines<sup>3</sup>**

All sponsorship arrangements must:

- a) directly relate to the department's outcomes
- b) provide value for money
- c) enhance the department's credibility and image
- d) deliver clear and measurable benefits to the marketing communication campaign.

<sup>2</sup> Detailed description of PR - Appendix 7

<sup>3</sup> Definition and key features on sponsorship guideline - Appendix 8

### **3.5.1 Government as a sponsor**

- 3.5.1.1 If the department has no central sponsorship programme, nor funding set aside specifically for sponsorship, requests for sponsorship related to marketing communication projects should be forwarded to the business unit that most closely links with the event or project in question.
- 3.5.1.2 It is up to the business unit to develop a sponsorship proposal that funds any arrangements. Sponsorships can be in kind or in cash and should always be recorded in the Donations Register of the department.
- 3.5.1.3 Please note that sponsorships amounting to R100 000 or less should be approved by the Accounting Officer of the department, and any sponsorship above the amount of R100 000 should be approved by National Treasury. Sign-off procedures for any sponsorship arrangements can be endorsed by business unit managers in line with the applicable financial delegation accorded to them.

### **3.5.2 Private sector and international donor-sponsored projects**

- 3.5.2.1 Government will not enter into marketing communication sponsorship arrangements with organisations or institutions whose projects are likely to adversely affect the content or interpretation of the department's programmes or services or raise conflict of interest.
- 3.5.2.2 Government will not enter into marketing communication sponsorship arrangements with political parties and with service organisations that may use the funds to sponsor or make a grant to a third party.
- 3.5.2.3 For the purposes of these guidelines, the following are not considered to be sponsorship activities, unless included as part of an overall sponsorship package, in which other direct sponsorship benefits are provided:
  - a) grants made as part of a funding programme
  - b) stand-alone advertising contracts
  - c) projects such as displays and exhibitions in which the department does not receive genuine and measurable value for money
  - d) scholarships
  - e) communication-related research projects.
- 3.5.2.4 Sponsorship for communication-related research projects could be considered in liaison with the GCIS Research Unit.

### **3.5.3 Sponsorship guiding principles**

- 3.5.3.1 Communication units of the applicable departments are required to process applications that relate specifically to their core business. If it is determined that another business unit would be more appropriate to deal with a specific sponsorship proposal, the proposal should be forwarded to that unit for processing.
- 3.5.3.2 All sponsorship agreements (even those that involve a small amount of money or non-monetary items) are required to be in writing, either as a letter or a formal contract.
- 3.5.3.3 The official developing a sponsorship agreement should check the context of the agreement to ensure that it does not conflict with the core business of the department or with any existing agreements, and that it does not expose government to any type of liability.
- 3.5.3.4 The signatories for both parties must have the authority to sign such an agreement. It is advisable in the case of a government department/institute, that the head of such an organisation be the signatory of sponsorship agreements.
- 3.5.3.5 All sponsorship agreements must clarify the roles, rights and responsibilities of both parties and protect the department and government from unwanted liabilities.
- 3.5.3.6 All agreements must include a clause that affords departments the right to terminate the arrangement when it is felt that the sponsors' activities are incompatible with that of the department.
- 3.5.3.7 Any marketing communication sponsorship deal undertaken by a department must not compromise the department's reputation, public image, integrity or its ability to fulfil its functions.
- 3.5.3.8 While departments do not provide sponsors with commercial endorsements, sponsors may gain credibility from association with the department. Departments have to be extremely careful in such circumstances as they may lose credibility by associating with businesses that have a poor reputation or are in conflict with government's vision, programmes and commitments.
- 3.5.3.9 Protecting government's and the department's reputation must be expressed as a term or terms in the sponsorship agreement. All departmental sponsorship agreements should have certain standard criteria, which are outlined later in the policy.
- 3.5.3.10 Terms and conditions for sponsorship should be precise and should address the following:
  - a) identify all parties to the sponsorship (including any third parties)
  - b) specify the exact nature and value of the sponsorship
  - c) specify the payment terms, including how and when the payment will be made and to whom
  - d) specify the length of the sponsorship agreement, options or conditions for renewal, the period of time for any

- option and the formula to be used to calculate any increase in price
  - e) describe what the money is to be used for as set out in the budget
  - f) specify in detail both parties' rights and benefits
  - g) set out any special conditions that apply
  - h) set out financial accountability requirements, including the terms of payment; an appropriate, fair and equitable valuation of all contra items; and conditions on the use of funds received or provided
  - i) specify what should happen to any surplus funds
  - j) specify warranties and details concerning liability, including limits to liability and who is responsible for public liability and insurance
  - k) stipulate that the department is under no obligation to continue the relationship beyond the contract period
  - l) set out procedures for communicating with and reporting on suppliers
  - m) specify who owns any intellectual property which might arise
  - n) specify relations with any employees of the organisation seeking sponsorship opportunities
  - o) consider methods to secure payment against the other party's failure to deliver
  - p) indemnify the department and government to risk.
- 3.5.3.11 When co-branding activities, government's Corporate Identity must be adhered to with respect to all creative material developed in the promotion of the sponsored activity.
- 3.5.3.12 The sponsorship agreement should indicate where and how the sponsor's Corporate Identity will be used in relation to the department's Corporate Identity. It is important to note that any co-branding activities must be approved by GCIS's CSA.
- 3.5.3.13 Officials responsible for developing sponsorship agreements are responsible for ensuring that the guidelines for the use of the Coat of Arms are met (these are also available on <http://www.gcis.gov.za>).
- 3.5.3.14 Sponsorship agreements must include the department's right to review all promotional material and activities, including specific uses prior to release.

### **3.6 Direct marketing and distribution**

#### **3.6.1 Bulk distribution**

- 3.6.1.1 Departments should seek to leverage the GCIS's distribution network as the first choice for bulk distribution and must not enter into publication distribution agreements with external service-providers without written approval from the GCIS.
- 3.6.1.2 If your marketing strategy includes the distribution of material to your target audiences, consider the following:
- a) ensure that the material is tailored to the needs of your target audience
  - b) your method of distribution must take into account the location of your audiences (urban-rural divide), language, gender and cultural issues
  - c) where appropriate, the material must be distributed electronically
  - d) since distribution can be a time-consuming, costly and labour-intensive activity, you may want to use the services of the GCIS distribution agency.

### **3.7 Publications**

#### **3.7.1 Responsibility of heads of communication**

HoCs are responsible for ensuring that official departmental publications comply with the requirements of the Official Publications Deposit, and that the appropriate identification numbers such as International Standard Book Number (ISBN), national departments' Annual Reports Number (RP) or provincial departments' Annual Report Number (PR) are allocated to all official publications.

#### **3.7.2 Publication strategy**

- 3.7.2.1 All departmental marketing publications – brochures, newsletters, reports, magazines, newspapers and the like – must be based on the marketing strategy approved by the HoC.
- 3.7.2.2 Departments should only produce publications if there is a legitimate public benefit in doing so, or if the public requires specific information which is best communicated through a publication.
- 3.7.2.3 The procurement and appointment of external service-providers used in the production of such publications will be in accordance with government procurement processes, and will be made from the database of GCIS-approved service-providers.
- 3.7.2.4 All publications must conform to departmental Corporate Identity standards.

- 3.7.2.5 All publications must be printed with due regard for the language preferences of the intended audience, and according to plain language requirements as reflected in **Appendix 2**.
- 3.7.2.6 The content of publications must conform to the content requirements outlined in Section 3.3.6 of these policy guidelines.
- 3.7.2.7 The size and style of typefaces and other design elements used in the publications must serve to promote effective readability – refer to **Appendix 8** for design cues to aid readability of publications.
- 3.7.2.8 It is the responsibility of the Office of the HoC to ensure that publications produced by the department do not bring the department into disrepute by virtue of their content, whether it is the quality of the written content or the quality of any photographic images or other graphic material.
- 3.7.2.9 It is the responsibility of the Office of the HoC to ensure that publications produced by the department respect the relevant copyright and privacy requirements.

### **3.7.3 Publication on the Internet**

- 3.7.3.1 Publications issued by the department should be made available on the department's Internet site in PDF format unless the HoC determines not to publish on the website because of the:
  - a) high publication costs relative to the benefit of electronic accessibility
  - b) high publication complexity
  - c) low suitability for web delivery.

## **3.8 Digital marketing<sup>4</sup>**

- 3.8.1 The introduction or increased use of digital media does not constitute a complete departure from the traditional communication objectives of government communication campaigns, nor does it indicate a shift in government communication target markets. Instead, the use of digital media should be seen as contributing to government's ability to achieve its traditional objectives more effectively, while adapting to a rapidly changing communication environment.

## **3.9 Departmental websites**

- 3.9.1 Departmental websites should:
  - a) establish a Corporate Identity and create visibility for the department
  - b) provide an efficient method of delivering current, factual and official information to the public
  - c) market the department to external and internal stakeholders
  - d) publish information about the department to support strategic goals and meet legislative requirements.
- 3.9.2 Public information is to be published on the departmental website except where the HoC determines not to publish on the website because of the:
  - a) high publication costs relative to the benefit of electronic accessibility
  - b) high publication complexity
  - c) low suitability for web delivery.
- 3.9.3 The departmental HoC is responsible for website content and must ensure that:
  - a) information on the department's policies, programmes, services and initiatives is regularly updated, accurate and easy to understand
  - b) there is a mechanism on the department's website for receiving and acknowledging public feedback
  - c) the services and information resources provided through the website are comparable in quality and functionality to those delivered by other communication channels
  - d) people appearing in photographs published on the website have given permission for the use of their images
  - e) privacy rights and copyright ownership are respected.
- 3.9.4 All PDF documents must show the size of the pdf e.g. 700kb, and must open in a new window to ensure the site remains open when the PDF is closed.

<sup>4</sup> Detailed information on digital marketing – Appendix 9

### **3.10 Third-party advertising and references on websites**

- 3.10.1 Paid advertising is not allowed on any department's website.
- 3.10.2 Organisations sponsoring departmental activities may only be acknowledged in text on relevant pages.
- 3.10.3 Organisations sponsoring departmental activities may have their logos added to the department website if approved by the HoC, or designate. Only in exceptional circumstances will approval be granted.

### **3.11 Social media protocols**

- 3.11.1 Any weblog ("blog") or presence on a social media site e.g. Facebook that identifies the author as an employee of the department, and/or refers to activities and policies of the department, must be sent to the office of the HoC for approval before it is published on the Internet.

## **4. Crisis Policy Guidelines**

### **4.1 Background**

- 4.1.1 For the purposes of these policy guidelines, a crisis is defined as any emergency or controversy in the department that results or could result in extensive media coverage and public scrutiny, and that could negatively affect the public perception or reputation of the department or the country in general.
- 4.1.2 The way that the Government communicates in a crisis has a lasting impact on its reputation. How well a particular department gets its message across to the public depends to a great extent on what is reported in the news. This is especially true in crises, when people rely primarily on the information they receive from newspapers, television and radio to form their opinions.
- 4.1.3 These crisis communication policy guidelines seek to provide:
  - a) a succinct overview of the key actions and processes to follow in the event of a crisis
  - b) the criteria for when an incident should be referred to GCIS for crisis management leadership and guidance
  - c) crisis communication policy guidelines that should be implemented by departments
  - d) a comprehensive set of crisis communication resources that can be used at the discretion of department communicators to build, manage and maintain an effective issue and crisis management capability.
- 4.1.4 These policy guidelines are focused on crisis communication, and complement, rather than compete with or replace, other disaster and crisis management protocols within government.

### **4.2 Crisis communication policy guidelines on potential tier one issues**

- 4.2.1 Crises relating to the following transversal issues are classified as potential tier one issues and should be immediately referred to the Chief Director: Government and Media Liaison at the GCIS for leadership of the issue's response. These are:
  - a) 2010 controversies
  - b) acts of terror committed in South Africa
  - c) international acts of terror impacting on South Africa and/or its citizens
  - d) major natural disasters
  - e) controversies relating to the decisions and actions of Cabinet or Cabinet ministers
  - f) issues affecting national security
  - g) incidents impacting on the safety and well-being of communities in South Africa e.g. xenophobia
  - h) crises related to the communication of controversial issues or the unintended consequence of government communication or actions.
- 4.2.2 For tier one issues, the GCIS will either:
  - a) take the lead in managing the communication aspects of the issue
  - b) establish a command centre led by the GCIS and the lead department, which will manage communication collectively
  - c) assign communication leadership to a specific department in the case of a cluster response, with the GCIS participating in a support role
  - d) delegate the issue back to the referring department for communication management, and provide advice and counsel.

### **4.3 Crisis prevention**

- 4.3.1 The Office of the HoC will monitor international, national and regional print media on a daily basis and maintain regular contact with the DG and minister, advising the department's leadership on emerging issues that may lead to reputation crises.
- 4.3.2 The department's designated media monitoring agency will monitor local, regional and national news coverage of the department, advising the Office of the HoC on issues and/or trends that might lead to reputation crises.

### **4.4 Crisis reaction**

- 4.4.1 The Office of the HoC should be notified immediately of an emerging or breaking crisis within or affecting the department.
- 4.4.2 The HoC should inform the authority and line functionaries about the crises immediately after the information has been verified.
- 4.4.3 If a crisis should break into the public domain, the Office of the HoC must gather and verify information about the

- crisis, assess the severity of the crisis, and whether it should be escalated to the GCIS for leadership (tier one issues) or managed at departmental level.
- 4.4.4 If managed at departmental level, the Office of the HoC should assess whether it is able to implement a simple strategy to address and manage the issue departmentally, or whether the issue should be escalated to the departmental Crisis Management Team (CMT).
  - 4.4.5 Given the urgency of rapid communication, the HoC or his/her designee has the authority to begin taking action immediately with departmental guidance, until a broader decision can be made about how the department should proceed.
  - 4.4.6 The DG or his/her designee must assemble at the designated Command Centre as per the Crisis Management Plan and chair a CMT and – if required – include other specialist internal and external resources e.g. legal, PR, emergency services, technical experts, etc.
  - 4.4.7 Following input from the CMT, the Office of the HoC is responsible for developing the strategy and tactics on how information is to be released, who should speak for the department on the issue, and which audiences are to be communicated with.
  - 4.4.8 The Office of the HoC should establish the logistical details of releasing information, and distribute verified information as quickly as possible to an agreed list of internal and external audiences.
  - 4.4.9 The Office of the HoC must use multiple mediums to reach as many people as possible with accurate and timely information. This is especially important in the first hours and days of an emergency or a crisis.
  - 4.4.10 The communication goal of the Office of the HoC is to be open, accountable and accessible to all audiences, although mindful of confidentiality and legal and privacy considerations.
  - 4.4.11 The guiding principle of the Office of the HoC is to communicate facts as quickly as possible, updating information regularly as circumstances change.
  - 4.4.12 Final approval of the communication recommendations by the Office of the HoC rests with the DG/minister or his/her designated nominee.
  - 4.4.13 The Office of the HoC must implement the communication strategy immediately upon approval by the DG/minister or his/her designated nominee.

#### **4.5 Crisis spokespeople**

- 4.5.1 No one is authorised to speak to the news media in a crisis without clearance from the minister, the DG or the HoC or their designated nominees.
- 4.5.2 The HoC or his/her nominee is responsible for identifying departmental managers or staff with the knowledge and/or technical expertise to provide specialist input to media responses or to speak as official representatives of the department.
- 4.5.3 Designated spokespeople should make themselves available to respond to media enquiries in a prompt and professional manner, using all possible communication tools, including the crisis command centre.

#### **4.6 Working with the media**

- 4.6.1 All media enquiries to the department relating to the issue should be directed to the Office of the HoC.
- 4.6.2 The Office of the HoC should work to supply verifiable details to the news media as rapidly as possible, using appropriate media communication channels.
- 4.6.3 All media enquiries should ideally receive an initial response from the department within 30 minutes after all facts have been established.
- 4.6.4 In the event of a breaking crisis, a media holding statement should be released no later than six hours after the first media enquiry.
- 4.6.5 After releasing information, the Office of the HoC and its external media monitoring agency should monitor the news coverage and respond appropriately where necessary.

#### **4.7 Recording media enquiries**

- 4.7.1 A dedicated media response set-up should be available to take all media enquiries and ensure that they are properly responded to.
- 4.7.2 To ensure that the department responds to all media enquiries professionally and promptly, the office of the HoC should maintain a log to record all calls and interview requests from members of the media during a crisis situation.
- 4.7.3 A sample of a media log is included in **Appendix 10**.

#### **4.8 Communication approval processes**

- 4.8.1 Crisp decision-making is required during a crisis to enable rapid and accurate communication to various internal and external stakeholders.
- 4.8.2 To expedite the communication process in a crisis situation, final approval for all crisis communication at departmental level rests with the HoC or his/her designee. Where required, the HoC can verify facts with the relevant departmental line functionaries.

#### **4.9 Employee communication**

- 4.9.1 The Office of the HoC should be especially mindful of the need to address departmental employees as a priority audience.
- 4.9.2 Whenever practical, the Office of the HoC, working with Human Resources, should attempt to inform departmental employees of the issues relating to the crisis, using established internal communication channels, before or simultaneously with the details being released to external audiences.

#### **4.10 Integrity of communication**

- 4.10.1 The Office of the HoC should adopt an attitude that all communication to all stakeholders may find its way into the public domain. The content and tone of any communication issued by the Office of the HoC to a specific audience – even if not meant for public consumption – should not embarrass the department or bring the department into disrepute, should it be leaked into the public domain.

#### **4.11 Informing other government stakeholders**

- 4.11.1 The Office of the HoC should identify relevant government stakeholders and coordinate appropriate crisis communication to such stakeholders who are likely to be affected by, or have a strong interest in the issue.
- 4.11.2 Whenever practical and relevant, the Office of the HoC should attempt to:
  - a) inform such government stakeholders of impending media calls that the Office of the HoC may be aware of
  - b) supply such government stakeholders with copies of media communication when it is distributed to the news media
  - c) notify them of any planned departmental media briefings.

#### **4.12 Stakeholder communication response times**

- 4.12.1 The goal of the Office of the HoC is to ensure that the department gives a credible public response within one hour of a media enquiry involving health, safety or the environment, or any media enquiry or potential issue that may lead to a story that damages the department's reputation.
- 4.12.2 Such an initial response may take the form of a brief holding statement (refer to guidelines in **Appendix 11**) that confirms that the department is aware of/investigating the alleged incident, establishes the commitment of the department to responsible issue management and communication, and establishes the authorised source of media information within the department for ongoing liaison.

#### **4.13 Identification of relevant stakeholders**

- 4.13.1 The Office of the HoC should build and maintain a comprehensive list of internal and external stakeholders for the department, with contact details, which form part of the Crisis Communication Plan. A sample list of stakeholders is included in **Appendix 12**.
- 4.13.2 The Office of the HoC should maintain a media contact list for the department, in both hard copy and digital format for use in a crisis situation.
- 4.13.3 The stakeholder and media contact lists should be updated monthly by the Office of the HoC.

#### **4.14 Next of kin and victim communication**

- 4.14.1 It is the responsibility of the South African Police Service (SAPS) to notify next of kin in the event of a crisis-related fatality. The department and its communication team should make every effort to ensure that it does not release

the identities of any dead or injured persons until such time as it has been confirmed that the next of kin have been informed by the relevant authorities.

4.14.2 Personal information that cannot be released to the media includes:

- a) a patient's medical history
- b) home address or telephone number of any member of the department
- c) the identity of any department member involved in a serious incident, such as a shooting, vehicle accident, etc. until the SAPS investigating officer in charge has approved the release of this information.

#### **4.15 Interdepartmental and multi-agency communication**

- 4.15.1 The department should recognise that extraordinary and rapid efforts may be required in times of crisis or emergency. Several government departments and agencies at national, provincial or local level may be involved in responding to an emergency or crisis. Cooperation with others, such as industry or community leaders and non-governmental organisations, may also be required.
- 4.15.2 Where it is unclear which government department or agency should take the lead in cross-jurisdictional crisis communication, the GCIS will take the lead role.
- 4.15.3 The department or agency having primary jurisdiction as determined by the GCIS should be responsible for releasing or coordinating the release of information to the media and other stakeholders.
- 4.15.4 No member of the department must release information from another department or agency without first obtaining permission from such department or agency, and only the Office of the HoC can conduct any such release.

#### **4.16 Media monitoring**

- 4.16.1 The Office of the HoC should activate and intensify daily media monitoring services during a crisis so as to be aware of how the department is being portrayed in early and ongoing media coverage.
- 4.16.2 The Office of the HoC must accordingly maintain or adjust the communication response as needed to limit rumours, correct errors and maintain confidence in the department.
- 4.16.3 Summaries of relevant media coverage should be provided to the department's senior leadership and CMT at least twice a day during a crisis situation.

#### **4.17 Evaluation and follow-up**

- 4.17.1 When the crisis is past, the Office of the HoC must supply the CMT, the DG, the minister and GCIS with a summary of news coverage relating to the crisis.
- 4.17.2 Members of the CMT should review this report and evaluate the department's performance "under fire". The team must note:
  - a) overall success or failure of the crisis communication effort
  - b) problems to be avoided in the future
  - c) appropriate follow-up measures.
- 4.17.3 Attention also should be focused on identifying and implementing measures to improve the action plan used during the crisis.

#### **4.18 Updating of stakeholder lists**

- 4.18.1 The Office of the HoC should update the stakeholder contact details in its media list and crisis communication plan at least twice a year.

## **5. Local Government Communication Policy Guidelines**

### **5.1 The aim of these policy guidelines is to assist municipalities in delivering well co-ordinated, effectively managed and responsive communication to meet the needs of the public.**

### **5.2 Objectives of policy guidelines**

- a) provide the public with timely, accurate, clear and complete information about its policies, programmes, services and initiatives
- b) ensure that its communication caters for all official languages, depending on the area
- c) continuously ensure that the municipality is visible and accessible to the public
- d) ensure that its communication messages reach the widest possible audience with diverse needs
- e) identify important and crucial issues to communities and address the implementation of the municipal Programme of Action as contained in the Integrated Development Plan
- f) ensure that it consults with the public, listen to and take into account people's interests and concerns when establishing priorities, developing policies and planning programmes and services
- g) continuously ensure that the information service is managed in a people-centred and client-focused manner
- h) continue to build public trust and confidence in the integrity of the municipality and government as a whole
- i) ensure that communication is integrated and coordinated across the three spheres of government.

### **5.3 Communication functions of municipalities should:**

- a) develop policies that are in line with their communication requirements
- b) ensure that provincial and district communication policies are informed by these communication policy guidelines
- c) ensure that once provincial and district communication policies are concluded, these policies go through the relevant structures for final approval before implementation.

### **5.4 The role of local government communication in public participation**

5.4.1 Local government communication plays a major role in public participation. It acts as scientific support, provides technical advice to campaigns, assists to broaden community participation and with the sustainability of public participation processes and programmes, strengthens the impact of public participation and provides informed environmental analyses (research).

5.4.2 The role of communication in public participation is:

- a) preparing the community for public engagements and allowing for input before and after the engagements have taken place
- b) popularising public participation programmes
- c) interacting with and engaging all role players for the success of public participation programmes.

5.4.3 Role players should include the following:

- a) community members: they are the beneficiaries of the public participation process
- b) administration: the municipality must avail resources, implement capacity-building programmes and integrate all municipal processes, programmes and activities into the public participation cycle
- c) elected public representatives: these include the speaker (custodian of the process), mayor (in executing his/her responsibility), members of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) and the chairpersons of portfolio committees
- d) ward committees: they have an advisory role and represent the interests of their wards
- e) community development workers (CDWs): they fulfil their responsibility as community field workers
- f) external players:
  - i) other provincial and national government departments
  - ii) representatives from provincial and national structures (there should be integrated programmes)
  - iii) the provincial legislature and the National Council of Provinces
  - iv) CDW coordinator at district level
  - v) members of the district council.

## **5.5 Capacity-building at the local sphere of government**

5.5.1 All municipalities should budget for the training and development of communicators. Municipalities are encouraged to use Sector Education and Training Authority levies and Municipal Infrastructure Grant allocations for this training.

## **5.6 Induction programme for municipal communicators and political principals<sup>5</sup>**

- 5.6.1 Municipalities must have an induction programme in place for municipal communicators and political principals. Orientation is necessary, since municipalities are complex institutions with various stakeholders and components.
- 5.6.2 Municipal communicators must have a thorough orientation in terms of the workplace, including an introduction to all political principals, heads of units and leaders of institutions associated with the municipality. The interrelatedness and collective character of the municipality in terms of service delivery will not be properly understood without such orientation, which could lead to skewed communication services.

## **5.7 Development of a municipal communication strategy<sup>6</sup>**

- 5.7.1 The provincial communication core team should assist provincial departments, districts and local municipalities in drafting the strategy and presenting it to all relevant structures for discussion and approval.
- 5.7.2 All communicators in the province should participate in the development of a provincial communication strategy.

## **5.8 Institutional communication arrangements**

- 5.8.1 Since communication is a strategic function and should be consciously planned, dedicated institutions for this function are required at municipal level.
- 5.8.2 The following must be established:
- a) a communication unit must be located in the Office of the Mayor; but with administrative accountability to the Municipal Manager. This means the function will be politically accountable to the Mayor and administratively to the Municipal Manager
  - b) the communication unit should ideally comprise officials to handle the following functions: internal communication; external communication, including the imbizo programmes; media and stakeholder liaison; media production; and marketing and branding
  - c) municipal communicators should sit on the Executive Committee of municipalities, to be able to appreciate policy and be in a better position to articulate it, but also to present current affairs and advise on the communication implications of deliberations
  - d) it is recommended that municipalities establish an internal communication forum to coordinate communication activities within the municipality
  - e) it is also recommended that frequent communication strategising meetings be held, headed by the Mayor or Speaker, to provide communication guidance
  - f) it is recommended that municipalities establish municipal communication forums to develop their own municipal communication capacity
  - g) municipal communication officers should be represented on the district and provincial government communication forums (GCFs)
  - h) guidelines for the development of communication strategies at municipal level should be completed by August each year
  - i) at institutional level, oversight and leadership of political principals is a prerequisite to ensure adequate reporting and accountability within the municipality
  - j) the rank of the communication officer should reflect the strategic importance of communication
  - k) communication officers should participate in various strategic committees in the municipality, e.g. the Mayoral Committee, so that they can appreciate the work of such committees and have direct information
  - l) the roles and key performance areas of the communication officer must be clearly defined.

<sup>5</sup> Detailed information on induction programme for municipal communicators and political principals – Appendix 13

<sup>6</sup> Detailed information on development of a municipal communication strategy – Appendix 14

## **5.9 Provincial and local government communication forums**

### **5.9.1 Provincial Communication Forum (PCF)<sup>7</sup>**

5.9.1.1 The forum is commonly referred to as the Intergovernmental Communication Forum or ICGF provincially.

5.9.1.2 Roles and functions of the Provincial Communication Forum

- a) The PCF is a strategic meeting of government communicators in a particular province.
- b) The Office of the Premier coordinates this forum with assistance from the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, South African Local Government Association (Salga) and the GCIS.
- c) The HoCs within departments, parastatals and districts attend the PCF.
- d) The PCF is a platform that should be used to share information and iron out communication problems in the province.
- e) The PCF should assist with capacity-building and profiling case studies (it helps communicators to share lessons learned and best practices).
- f) The PCF also assists with strategising for communication.
- g) The provincial communications core teams should be represented in the PCF.

### **5.10 District Communication Forum (DCF)<sup>8</sup>**

#### **5.10.1 Roles and functions of the District Communication Forum**

- a) The DCF is a strategic meeting of government communicators in a particular district.
- b) District municipalities (DMs) should coordinate the DCF with assistance from the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Salga and the GCIS.
- c) The DCF should be attended by the HoCs of local municipalities, parastatals and any other government-related structures in the district.
- d) The DCF should be used to share information and iron out communication problems on a district level.
- e) The DCF's communication head should participate in provincial meetings and work with provinces in organising meetings with the South African National Editors' Forum.
- f) The DCF should assist local municipalities with capacity, and with communication strategies.
- g) The DCF should coordinate and organise a calendar of events for the district and ensure that these activities are streamlined across the district to avoid duplication and a waste of resources.
- h) As the aims of DCFs are coordination and information sharing, the agenda should include:
  - i) assessing the communication environment, the public mood and the media agenda
  - ii) providing feedback from the GCF, the PCF, and other forums, e.g. the premier's/mayor's forums
  - iii) performing district and local communication strategy reviews, i.e. asking "how far are we?"
  - iv) compiling the communication programme, including input from all three spheres (usually guided by theme months and the communication cycle of each sphere)
  - v) having special discussions on izimbizo, Cabinet/premier outreach programmes and mayoral/council meetings with the people
  - vi) distributing communication and information resource material
  - vii) assessing the status of the Thusong Service Centre Programme (formerly multipurpose community centres) and the promotion plan in the district
  - viii) providing capacity-building assistance to members of the forum
  - ix) monitoring the implementation of the imbizo approach on an ongoing basis in the municipal communication cycle through "Mayor and Ward Councillors Meet the People" initiatives
  - xi) ensuring effective monitoring systems of such forums through the relevant provincial intergovernmental relations (IGR) premier's/mayor's forums.

### **5.11 Local Communication Forum (LCF)<sup>9</sup>**

5.11.1 On a local level, municipalities should establish their own communication forums or put in place any other appropriate mechanisms to manage communication processes with communication partners operational at the level of the municipality.

<sup>7</sup> Detailed information on provincial communication forums – Appendix 15

<sup>8</sup> Detailed information on district communication forum – Appendix 16

<sup>9</sup> Detailed information on local communication forum – Appendix 17

5.1.1.2 Roles and functions of the Local Communication Forum

- a) The LCF is a strategic meeting of government communicators in a particular municipality.
- b) The LCF should be attended by the HoCs of local municipalities, parastatals and any other government-related structures in the district.
- c) The LCFs should be used to share information and iron out communication problems on a district level.
- d) The LCFs should assist each other with strategising for communication.
- e) The LCFs should coordinate and organise a calendar of events with the districts and ensure that these activities are streamlined across the district to avoid duplication and a waste of resources.
- f) As the aim of the LCF is coordination and information sharing, the agenda should include:
  - i) assessing the communication environment, the public mood and the media agenda
  - ii) providing feedback from the GCF, PCF, DCF and other forums, e.g. the premier's/mayor's forums
  - iii) performing district and local communication strategy reviews, i.e. asking "how far are we?"
  - iv) compiling the communication programme, including input from all three spheres (usually guided by theme months and the communication cycle of each sphere)
  - v) having special discussions on izimbizo, Cabinet/premier outreach programmes and mayoral/council meetings with the people
  - vi) distributing communication and information resource material
  - vii) monitoring the implementation of the imbizo approach on an ongoing basis in the municipal communication cycle through "Mayor and Ward Councillors Meet the People" initiatives
  - ix) ensuring effective monitoring systems of such forums through the relevant provincial IGR Premier's/Mayor's Forum.

5.1.1.3 Structures at municipal level which may form a forum include:

- a) local municipal communicators
- b) communicators from departments with local offices
- c) communicators from hospitals and police stations
- d) CDWs and health workers
- e) other community structures of importance.

## 6. References and Acknowledgements

These guidelines have been formulated with reference to the following documents:

### MEDIA

- City of London Police Media Relations Policy
- Whole of Government Communications Policy – Tasmania
- Heriot-Watt University Media Relations Policy
- Government of Alberta Communications Policy
- Communications Policy of the Government of Canada
- Mediasmart – Dennis Stauffer
- *How to Talk to the Media* – Judith Byrne
- *Press Here* – Annie Gurton
- *Handling Difficult Questions* – *SA Journal of Public Relations*. November 1995

### MARKETING

- *Proposed Guidelines for Advertising Campaigns for National Government Departments of the Republic of South Africa* – GCIS, 2008
- [http://www.alp.org.au/download/guidelines\\_on\\_campaign\\_advertising.pdf](http://www.alp.org.au/download/guidelines_on_campaign_advertising.pdf) June 2008
- [www.premcab.sa.gov.au/pdf/circulars/pc009\\_master\\_media.pdf](http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/pdf/circulars/pc009_master_media.pdf)
- <http://www.cabinetmanual.cabinetoffice.govt.nz/appendix-b> Appendix B: Guidelines for Government Advertising
- <http://www.advertising.nswp.commerce.nsw.gov.au/Advertising/Government+Advertising+Guidelines/Government+Advertising+Guidelines.htm#Campaign%20Advertising>
- <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/bill/gafaab2000640/>
- <http://www.finance.gov.au/Advertising/non-campaign-advertising.html>
- [http://wopared.parl.net/senate/committeefapa\\_ctte/completed\\_inquiries/2004-07/govtadvertising/report/e05.htm](http://wopared.parl.net/senate/committeefapa_ctte/completed_inquiries/2004-07/govtadvertising/report/e05.htm)
- [http://www.communications.tas.gov.au/home/communications\\_policy/4\\_policy\\_requirements/4.1\\_informing\\_tasmanians/communication\\_methods/4.1.7\\_advertising](http://www.communications.tas.gov.au/home/communications_policy/4_policy_requirements/4.1_informing_tasmanians/communication_methods/4.1.7_advertising)
- *Elections 2009 – Guidelines on Government Communication during an Election Period*
- Curtin University Brand and Corporate Visual Identity Guidelines
- Australian Government – Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet: *How to Write a Brief for a Creative Advertising Agency*
- Boston University Broadcast E-Mail Policy and Procedure, 2006
- Government of Canada Advertising Guidelines
- *The Client Brief: A Best Practice Guide to Briefing Communications Agencies* – Association of Quebec Advertising Agencies
- *Commonwealth of Australia Advertising Guidelines*
- US Plain Language Act of 2008
- University of California Electronic Communications Policy
- Whitsundayshire Council – Advertising Policy 2007
- *Guidelines for Victorian Government Advertising and Communications*
- *New Zealand Cabinet Guidelines for Government Advertising – 1989*
- *New South Wales Creative Agency Briefing template*
- *New South Wales Government Advertising Guidelines*
- *Government of Canada – Procedures for Participating in Fairs and Exhibitions*
- *The Clarity Kit – Developing a Strategy for Clear Language in Municipal Communications*
- *Government of West Australia – Campaign Advertising Approval Process*
- GCIS Content Strategy – August 2008
- Kotler, Philip. *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control*. 8th ed. Prentice-Hall, 1994
- *Marketing Communications: An Integrated Approach*. PR Smith and Jonathan Taylor. 2004. Kogan Page
- *Value Added Public Relations: The Secret Weapon of Integrated Marketing*. Thomas L Harris. 1998. NTC Business Books
- *Effective Public Relations*. Scott M Cutlip, Allen H. Center and Glen M Broom. 1994. Prentice Hall
- *E-PR: Public Relations on the Internet*. Matt Haig. 2000. Kogan Page
- *Kellogg on Integrated Marketing*. Edited by Dawn Lacobucci and Bobby Calder. 2003. John Wiley & Sons

## **CRISIS**

- *Crisis Communication Best Practice* – Peter M. Sandman. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*. Vol. 34, No. 3, August 2006
- *Communicating in a Crisis: Risk Communication Guidelines for Public Officials*. 2002. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- *Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication*. 2002. US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention
- University of Louisville – Crisis Policies and Procedures.
- *Resilience to Risk* – Sean Cleary and Thierry Malleret. 2006. Human & Rousseau.
- *Crisis Management – Planning for the inevitable*. Steven Fink. 2002. iUniverse Inc.
- *Harvard Business Review on Crisis Management*. 2000. Harvard Business School Press
- *Crisis Management – Master the Skills to Prevent Disasters*. 2004. Harvard Business School Press
- *The Crisis Counsellor – A Step-by-Step Guide to Managing a Business Crisis*. Jeffrey Caponigro. 2000. Contemporary Books
- *Effective Crisis Management – Worldwide Principles and Practice*. Mike Seymour and Simon Moore. 2000. Cassell
- *Crisis Control – Preventing and Managing Corporate Crises*. Ross Campbell. 1999. Penguin/Viking
- *The Importance of Communication in Excellent Crisis Management* – Francis J Marra, Senior Lecturer, School of Marketing: Curtin University of Technology

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES**

Comprehensive set of guidelines outlined in the documents *Guidelines for Municipal Communication* developed in 2007 by SALGA, the then Department of Provincial and Local Government (now Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs) and GCIS.

## **7. Document Acceptance and Release Notice**

This is the first edition of the Media, Marketing and Crisis Communication Policy Guidelines. The policy guidelines are a managed document. Changes will only be issued as a complete replacement document. Recipients should remove superseded versions from circulation.

These policy guidelines will be reviewed at least every year and be amended should legislation or a change in policy require this.

Review date: August 2009

## **8. Breach of Policy Guidelines**

These policy guidelines need to be read in association with other requirements that govern the expenditure of public funds. All campaigns are subject to the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 1999 (Act 1 of 1999), and the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa (ASA) Code of Advertising Practice and other relevant legislation.

The GCIS will only exempt a department from compliance with these guidelines on the basis of a national emergency, extreme urgency or other extraordinary reason the CEO of GCIS considers appropriate.

Breaches of this policy may be deemed breaches of the relevant provisions of the Code of Conduct and the obligations of departmental employees, and will be referred to the relevant authority in the department.

## **9. Supporting Policy**

Other guidelines available from the GCIS to support this policy include:

- *Editorial Style Guide for Government Departments and Communicators, 2009*
- *Government Communicators' Handbook, 2009*
- *Best Practice Guidelines for the Procurement of Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations (PR) Services and Products, 2008*
- Manual of GCIS in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000)
- *Elections 2009 – Guidelines on Government Communication during an Election Period*
- *Marketing, Advertising and Communication (MAC) Sector Charter on Black Economic Empowerment as published in the Government Gazette on 29 August 2008*
- *Republic of South Africa National Coat of Arms Corporate Identity and Branding Guidelines*
- *Republic of South Africa Corporate Image Guidelines.*

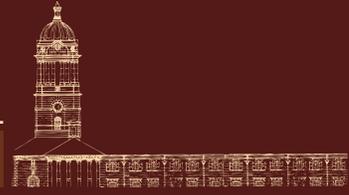
These supporting guidelines are published on the GCIS website <http://www.gcis.gov.za>

## **10. Other Relevant Government Guidelines**

In addition to the above, the policy guidelines should be used in conjunction with the National Treasury Regulations, including but not limited to:

- procurement guidelines
- regulations in terms of the PFMA, 1999.

These supporting guidelines are published on the National Treasury website, <http://www.treasury.gov.za>



## 16.2. Generic Scorecard for Heads of Communication

# 2010

## GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION: GENERIC SCORECARD FOR HEADS OF COMMUNICATION



# Contents



## CONTENT

1. Background	2
2. Context – GCIS and Senior Management System (SMS) Performance Management and Development System	3
3. Roles and responsibilities in relation to the Generic Performance Scorecard	4
4. Content areas of the Generic Scorecard (key result areas)	4
5. Consultative process	4

## ANNEXURE A:

Introduction to the Generic Performance Scorecard and instructions for use (for HoCs)

## ANNEXURE B:

Key result areas and weightings

GENERIC PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

## I. Background

The review process showed a need for integration and further enhancement of the government-wide communication system. It also indicated that there were some difficulties in linking the heads of communication's (HoCs) expected deliverables to their scope of work. Given this, a generic scorecard has been developed to serve as a tool to assist directors-general (DGs) and HoCs in defining and determining departmental and provincial communication deliverables and standardising the performance requirements of HoCs.

The Generic Performance Scorecard has been developed to aid all HoCs based at the national government departments and the HoCs based in the offices of the respective premiers.

Due to its generic approach, it is necessary that each department or province adapts the performance scorecard to accommodate their particular context and circumstances – e.g. the communicators employed by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation need to liaise with foreign representatives of South Africa and to see to it that they have adequate information available as soon as possible. To enable this, resources need to be appropriately allocated with regard to the required information and budget and other contributing factors need to be sought to allow effective measurement of task execution. This will then form a key result area or KRA, which refers to a broad area of performance, for which an incumbent will be held responsible. It must relate to the organisation's overall mission, as well as to why the specific job exists. KRAs are defined as a future state of achievement that helps an organisation to succeed and create value.

### **The following reports were consulted in the drawing up of the generic scorecard:**

- Cabinet memoranda 1998 and 2000
- National Communications Strategic Framework
- Comtask Report
- Review of Government-Wide Communication
- International Benchmark Studies
- GCIS Strategic Plan
- SMS Chapter on Performance Management and Development System.

### **The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) undertook this task, as it understands that:**

- communication is a strategic element of democracy
- it is key in a participatory democracy that government effectively communicates with its citizens in a transparent and coherent manner
- all government communicators "speak with one voice".

Effective government communication requires excellent coordination and integration of messages, campaigns and programmes. It also requires the effective implementation of the Government's Communication Strategy.

Strategy and planning are key elements for effective, integrated and coordinated government communication. The capacity to communicate with one voice is promoted by such practices as pre-Cabinet meetings, the Government Communicators' Forum and joint communication around programmes and campaigns undertaken collectively.

The GCIS has previously developed some tools (for example the Government Communicators' Handbook) to assist government communicators to understand their role as well as to introduce a "new approach to government communication that encourages integration, coordination and high levels of professionalism". However, the GCIS has recognised that greater integration and further enhancement in the delivery of its services can be realised through a process that monitors and measures performance. The identification of the need for a generic scorecard is seen to further enhance these types of initiatives by ensuring that a standard set of measurements, by which to hold HoCs equally accountable, is developed. The expected result of this is uniform accountability and better quality communication work from all HoCs. It will also address the perception of external stakeholders, as captured in the GCIS 10-year review document, that there is uneven performance across departments and spheres due to a lack of a uniform approach.

## **2. Context – GCIS and SMS Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)**

The context within which the generic performance scorecard for all HoCs is being developed is that of the government-wide communication system vis-à-vis the SMS PMDS. The development of a generic scorecard for HoCs is envisaged to form part of the existing SMS PMDS and is therefore not intended as a reinvention of the wheel.

### **SMS PMDS**

#### **The elements of the existing system of performance management include:**

- signed performance agreements
- an agreed format
- 80:20 KRAs (measurable output) and Core Management Criteria (CMC)
- linkage between organisational and individual performance management
- a standardised rating scale
- a performance management cycle
- moderation processes
- financial rewards
- personal development plans
- poor performance and dispute-resolution mechanisms.

#### **Described below are the key principles that underpin the SMS PMDS:**

- Departments are expected to manage performance in a consultative, supportive and non-discriminatory manner.
- Performance management should be linked to the organisation's strategic goals.
- An organisation implementing performance management is entitled to satisfactory work performance from all managers.
- All existing SMS members are expected to enter into a performance agreement within the first month of the new financial year. A newly appointed SMS member must enter into a performance agreement within the first three months of appointment.
- Performance management will be developmental (recognising outstanding performance) and transparent while maintaining administrative justice.
- SMS members must play an active role in developing their performance agreements.
- Performance agreements should be directly linked to the organisation's strategic/operational plan, provide information in respect of the progress made over the evaluation period and changes required in respect of delivery focus.
- New performance agreements should indicate how results could be improved in the forthcoming performance cycle.
- Performance outcomes should form the basis for staff development and developmental plans.
- Supervisors must provide constant feedback to employees to enable them to find ways of continuously improving their output.
- Corrective measures should be timeously undertaken should performance fall short of acceptable levels.

Performance management in the Public Service is guided by the Public Service Act, 1994, the Public Service Regulations, resolutions of the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC), Treasury Regulations and the Batho Pele White Paper and must be integrated with other systems and processes in the organisation.

The development of a generic scorecard for HoCs is therefore framed by these parameters and regulations.

### 3. Roles and responsibilities in relation to the Generic Performance Scorecard

#### Departments'/provinces' role:

- The Generic Performance Scorecard is being developed as a tool for DGs to manage the performance of HoCs against a standard set of measurements as determined by the "experts".
- It will form part of the Performance Agreement to be signed by the DG and HoC and remains their functional responsibility.

#### HoCs' role:

- HoCs must help define their accountabilities.
- They must perform in line with the provisions of the scorecard.
- They must report on and provide required evidence of performance.

#### GCIS' role:

- GCIS' role remains that of providing strategic guidance, coordination between various departments, and ensuring that communication is coherent
- In respect of the scorecard, the GCIS will provide a quality assurance or means of verification of performance role to DGs.

### 4. Content areas of the generic scorecard (KRAs)

**The key functional areas of a government communicator, as outlined in the Government Communicators' Handbook, the National Communication Strategic Framework and the GCIS 10-Year Review, are:**

- communication strategy development
- implementation plan development and actual implementation
- campaign management
- media relations
- management and use of various communication channels
- development communication
- internal communication
- management of unplanned and urgent communication.

### 5. Consultative Process

**HoCs were consulted towards the finalisation of the scorecard and had the following issues raised that need to be considered when implementing its use:**

- that prior to the implementation of the scorecard, enabling conditions be created in departments' communication units
- that communication units must be appropriately financed, properly located in departments and their role appreciated
- that communication forms part of the DG's Employment Agreement
- that a presentation be made in the first Cabinet Lekgotla to show the importance of communication and to get buy-in from the new Cabinet
- that a capacity improvement project be embarked upon to improve communication capacity in departments and provinces
- that continuous monitoring be conducted to check the level of progress in the improvement of capacity in communication units

- o that communicators ensure that they have the requisite skills to deliver a professional service
- The GCIS is currently developing a number of communication policy guidelines. These, together with the updated Government Communicators' Handbook, will serve as an invaluable tool during the implementation phase of the scorecard.
- All the above should be brought together in a comprehensive induction programme for HoCs appointed for the new political term.

## ANNEXURE A:

Introduction to the Generic Performance Scorecard and instructions for use (for HoCs)

### Why the scorecard?

In the public sector context, performance management is defined as “a purposeful, continuous process aimed at managing and developing employee behaviour for the achievement of the organisation’s strategic goals, the determination of the correct activities as well as the evaluation and recognition of the execution of tasks/duties with the aim of enhancing their efficiency and effectiveness; and a means of improving results from the organisation, teams and individuals by managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, objectives, standards and incentives”. In other words, the performance of the individual must be aligned to the achievement of the broad organisational goals and objectives and must make a significant contribution thereto.

The generic scorecard has been developed to serve as a tool to assist DGs and HoCs in defining and determining departmental and provincial communication deliverables. It is intended to promote and ensure uniformity in the quality of communication work, as well as to standardise HoCs’ performance requirements. It is also envisaged to serve as a development tool against which HoCs can identify areas for development.

The performance scorecard forms part of the performance agreement that the HoC will sign with the DG of the department and stipulates what work must be done, when it must be done and how it must be done.

### How do you use the scorecard?

The nature of the scorecard depicts a succinct and concise overview of key performance requirements and must therefore be read together with the Government Communicators’ Handbook as well as the various policy guidelines developed by the GCIS. The Generic Performance Scorecard and policy guidelines need to also form part of a comprehensive induction training programme for all HoCs.

Due to its generic approach, it is necessary that each department or province adapts the performance scorecard to accommodate their particular context and circumstances.

It comprises the following elements:

KEY RESULT AREA					
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	QUALITY REQUIREMENTS	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ENABLING CONDITION/S

The intent of the performance scorecard is to establish a strategic set of measurements and parameters against which the effectiveness of HoCs needs to be measured, and, as a result, the scorecard focuses on KRAs rather than on CMCs. In other words, it focuses on the measurable output required of communication departments rather than on generic managerial and leadership responsibilities. The CMCs are an attempt to create a common understanding of good management practice and clarify the expectations of individual managers in this regard.

### Key Result Area

A KRA refers to a broad area of performance, for which an incumbent will be held responsible. It must relate to the organisation’s overall mission, as well as to why the specific job exists. KRAs are defined as a future state of achievement that helps an organisation to succeed and create value.

The first step in developing KRAs is to identify the key responsibilities of a position and then to identify common themes. These must then be refined into realisable statements. KRAs should be SMART, i.e:

S – Simple, clear and understandable  
M – Measurable, in terms of quantity, quality, time or money  
A – Achievable and agreed between the member and the supervisor  
R – Realistic, within the control of the member but still challenging  
T – Timely, assessable within the annual reporting cycle.

### **Key Performance Indicator (KPI)**

A KPI is one of the elements reflected in a performance scorecard and refers to tasks, projects or programmes to be undertaken by an employee for the performance year. KPIs are defined in respect of each KRA – and can be seen as measurable output thereof. Measures can be set in terms of time (by when), quantity (how much) and quality (improving rates of return, maximising investment and reducing cost). They must, as far as possible, be based on an end result not effort. They must be within the control of the incumbent and they must be objective and observable.

### **Quality requirements**

Quality requirements provide detail around the standards or quality needed with regards to KPI delivery - i.e. quality requirements detail what the KPI aims to achieve and against what standard performance it will be measured.

### **Weighting**

The weighting refers to the score allocated to each KRA or KPI, which reflects its importance in relation to the other KRAs or KPIs on the individual scorecard. Total weightings must add up to 100%.

### **Target**

A target refers to the standard to which a KPI must be achieved (reflected in terms of measures such as time, quality and quantity).

### **Evidence**

This refers to the proof that the incumbent provides in support of achievement of a KPI.

### **Means of verification**

This column refers to the required KRA's "sign off" or route of approval.

### **Enabling conditions**

These represent the systems, support, resources, etc. that must be in place to ensure that performance against target is possible and meaningful. Enabling conditions could also be defined as additional resource requirements, in other words, the resources needed to achieve a particular activity/objective/output. These may be in the form of people, equipment or finances.

The following tips should be considered in determining key resource requirements:

- It is important to provide a motivation for any additional resource requirement.
- It is critical to identify who is responsible for acquiring additional resources and ensuring that the "enabling conditions" are in place. This needs to form part of that relevant individual's performance scorecard.
- The additional resource requirements and enabling conditions should be developed collaboratively between the employee and supervisor.

## ANNEXURE B:

### Key result areas and weightings

Key result areas (KRAs)	Weighting
Government/departmental communication planning, strategy development and implementation	xx
Implementation and management of campaigns	xx
Effective management and use of appropriate communication channels	xx
Building and sustaining a positive reputation of the department/province	xx
Effective management of "unplanned" and urgent communication	xx
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

KEY RESULT AREA	KEY PERFORMANCE AREA	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
1. Government/departmental communication planning, strategy development and implementation	1.1 Comprehensive Departmental/Provincial Communication Strategy and implementation plan developed and approved	By end March	Departmental/Provincial Communication Strategy and implementation plan and budget approved by DG	Draft strategy submitted to GCIS for input and alignment. Approval by departmental DG
	1.2 Effective involvement in the development and implementation of the cluster strategy demonstrated	Effective participation in cluster programmes	Minutes of cluster meetings; briefing notes and other documents developed	Approved by the GCIS Cluster Supervisor
	1.3 All key milestones in the Comprehensive Departmental/Provincial Communication Strategy implemented	All milestones as outlined in the communication implementation plan achieved	Implementation Report showing milestones implemented at due date within budget	Approved by the relevant client
2. Implementation and management of campaigns	2.1 Comprehensive campaign plan for each of the campaigns in the Departmental/Provincial Communication Strategy developed and approved	Completed campaign implementation plan	Final campaign implementation plan aligned to departmental strategy	Satisfies GCIS criteria
	2.2 Campaign plan objectives and milestones implemented and delivered	All milestones as outlined in the communication plan achieved	Implementation report showing milestones implemented at due date within budget	Approved by the relevant client
	2.3 Reach and impact of campaigns determined	Completed study that outlines the reach and impact of the campaign	Campaign reach and impact analysis report and results of study undertaken	Signed off by relevant departmental client
3. Effective management and use of appropriate communication channels	3.1 Departmental/provincial media relations programme implemented	100% implementation of the departmental/provincial media relations programme	Quality and quantity of media coverage and engagement	Departmental head pre-approval of media schedule; media feedback to independent review agency; independent review of quality of media releases and responses
	3.2 Appropriate communication channels to raise awareness of and support for the departmental/ provincial campaign objectives effectively used	Creative and cost-effective deployment of a variety of marketing channels	Samples of communication collateral developed, produced and distributed	Approved by the relevant internal client/s

KEY RESULT AREA	KEY PERFORMANCE AREA	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
4. Building and sustaining a positive reputation of the department/province	4.1 Development Communication Plan to enhance development communication within the department/ province developed and implemented	xxx number of projects successfully implemented	Samples of communication collateral developed and distributed for the general public; information provided on the government website; reporting on participation in the Imbizo Week programme	Approved by client business units within the department/ province; pre-approval of communication strategy by GCIS; stakeholder feedback
	4.2 Internal communication programme developed and implemented	100% of the internal communication plan implemented	Examples of the communication collateral produced and distributed. Number of employee briefings undertaken	Approved by client business units within the department/ province; internal communication audits among staff
5. Effective management of "unplanned" and urgent communication	5.1 Crisis communication on behalf of the department/ province effectively managed	All crisis communication situations managed effectively and in line with GCIS guidelines	Comprehensive Crisis Communications Report, including implementation of recommendations	
Approved by the GCIS				

I. Government/departmental communication planning, strategy development and implementation						
KEY RESULT AREA	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	QUALITY REQUIREMENTS	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ENABLING CONDITION/S
I.1 Comprehensive Departmental/ Provincial Communication Strategy and implementation plan developed and approved	<p>The Comprehensive Communication Strategy must be aligned with the National Communication Framework and the departmental strategy and business plan.</p> <p>The strategy should cover, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• departmental (business) objectives</li> <li>• cluster strategy requirements for the department or province</li> <li>• target audiences</li> <li>• environmental scan</li> <li>• communication objectives</li> <li>• core messages per audience sub-set</li> <li>• tactical implementation plan</li> <li>• measurement and evaluation criteria per activity</li> <li>• current and potential burning reputational issues</li> <li>• departmental crisis management structures and protocols</li> <li>• a comprehensive budget</li> </ul>	<p>Strategy and implementation plan approved by end March</p>	<p>Departmental / Provincial Communication Strategy</p> <p>Implementation plan and budget approved by DG</p>	<p>Draft strategy to first be submitted to GCIS for input and alignment</p> <p>Approval by departmental DG</p> <p>Strategy submitted to the GCIS for monitoring purposes</p>		
I.2 Effective involvement in the development and implementation of the cluster strategy demonstrated	<p>This KPI will measure how effectively the HoC has participated in the communication cluster work. They will be required to contribute in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide input into the development of a cluster strategy</li> </ul>	<p>Effective participation in cluster programmes</p>	<p>Minutes of cluster meetings; briefing notes and other documents developed</p>	<p>Approved by the GCIS Cluster Supervisor</p>		

I. Government/departmental communication planning, strategy development and implementation					
KEY RESULT AREA	QUALITY REQUIREMENTS	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ENABLING CONDITION/S
<p><b>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</b></p> <p>1.3 All key milestones in the Comprehensive Departmental/ Provincial Communication Strategy implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attend meetings of the cluster</li> <li>be actively involved in the work of the cluster, undertaking all tasks assigned</li> <li>provide content for media briefing notes</li> <li>be responsible for departmental lead campaigns</li> <li>participate in the implementation of the cluster's implementation plan for the year</li> <li>work with the GCIS on issues for current affairs</li> </ul> <p>Measurement and evaluation criteria for this would be the actual delivery of communication interventions as measured against the milestones in the approved Comprehensive Departmental/ Provincial Communication Strategy</p> <p>It would include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>events</li> <li>media releases produced and distributed</li> <li>advertisements designed and placed</li> <li>frequency and geographic spread of izimbizo</li> <li>media interviews as per media schedule</li> </ul> <p>All implemented as per the approved activity schedule</p>	<p>All milestones as outlined in the communication implementation plan achieved</p>	<p>Implementation report showing milestones implemented at due date within budget</p>	<p>Approved by the relevant client</p>	

2. Implementation and management of campaigns					
KEY RESULT AREA	QUALITY REQUIREMENTS	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ENABLING CONDITION/S
<p><b>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</b></p> <p>2.1 A comprehensive campaign plan for each of the campaigns as outlined in the Comprehensive Departmental/ Provincial Communication Strategy, developed and approved</p>	<p>The comprehensive campaign plan must identify the key issues that need to be proactively addressed and it must be approved by the GCIS prior to the launch</p> <p>The campaign plan must address, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key audiences</li> <li>• key messages</li> <li>• communication objectives</li> <li>• detailed implementation plan</li> <li>• measurement and evaluation criteria</li> <li>• budget</li> </ul>	<p>Completed campaign implementation plan</p>	<p>Final campaign implementation plan aligned to departmental strategy</p>	<p>Satisfies the GCIS criteria</p>	
<p>2.2 Campaign plan objectives and milestones implemented and delivered</p>	<p>The broad objectives of a campaign are to raise awareness, understanding, conviction and behavioural support for departmental initiatives among target audiences</p> <p>Measurement and evaluation criteria for this would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• actual delivery of communication interventions/milestones as measured against the approved campaign implementation plan</li> <li>• use of GCIS transversal contracts and services</li> <li>• use of platforms and products with respect to appropriate target audiences</li> <li>• Exit Report on campaign</li> </ul>	<p>All milestones as outlined in the communication plan achieved</p>	<p>Implementation report showing milestones implemented at due date within budget</p>	<p>Approved by the relevant client</p>	

2. Implementation and management of campaigns					
KEY RESULT AREA	QUALITY REQUIREMENTS	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ENABLING CONDITION/S
<p>2.3 Reach and impact of campaigns determined</p>	<p>Measuring the reach and impact of communication campaigns implemented is a key determinant of the effectiveness of communication</p> <p>A review of the communication efforts within campaigns and proactive and reactive communication in terms of reach and impact will highlight the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how well the campaign achieved the communication strategy objectives</li> <li>• how well it achieved against deadlines and budgets</li> <li>• what lessons were learnt and how these could be applied for future campaigns</li> </ul> <p>Measurement and evaluation criteria for this could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• impact assessment of advertising campaigns</li> <li>• stakeholder feedback</li> <li>• quantity and quality of media coverage</li> <li>• target audience response to the campaign e.g. increased registration, increased participation, etc.</li> <li>• intergovernmental relations – how well was the campaign rolled out at the provincial and local government levels</li> <li>• website hits</li> </ul>	<p>Completed study that outlines the reach and impact of the campaign</p>	<p>Campaign reach and impact analysis report and results of study undertaken</p>	<p>Signed off by relevant departmental client</p>	

3. Effective management and use of the appropriate communication channels					
KEY RESULT AREA	QUALITY REQUIREMENTS	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ENABLING CONDITION/S
<p>3.1 Departmental/ provincial media relations programme implemented</p>	<p>Each department and province must develop a media relations programme that is not specifically linked to campaigns</p> <p>The achievement of the media relations programme would be measured against the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• production of a proactive media schedule</li> <li>• development of an educated circle of media</li> <li>• volume and qualitative value of media releases</li> <li>• level of face-to-face engagement</li> <li>• production of supporting collateral e.g. fact sheets, FAQs</li> <li>• review of response times</li> <li>• review of quality of media releases and responses</li> </ul> <p>To also include daily media monitoring, analysis and rapid response as required</p>	<p>100% implementation of the departmental/provincial media relations programme</p>	<p>Quality and quantity of media coverage and engagement</p>	<p>Departmental head pre-approval of media schedule</p> <p>Media feedback to independent review agency</p> <p>Performance against media schedule</p> <p>Independent review of quality of media releases and responses</p>	
<p>3.2 Appropriate communication channels to raise awareness of and support for the departmental/ provincial campaign objectives effectively utilised</p>	<p>There are a number of broad communication channels and tools that could be used, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advertising</li> <li>• merchandising</li> <li>• events</li> <li>• sponsorship</li> <li>• public relations</li> <li>• publications</li> <li>• exhibitions</li> <li>• website</li> <li>• face to face</li> </ul> <p>Not all channels need be used simultaneously. Appropriate channels will be selected for each campaign</p> <p>Each department/province will need to deploy a communication mix aligned to their specific context (mandate) and resourcing capacity</p> <p>Selected tools must relate back to the tactical implementation plan in the comprehensive strategy</p>	<p>Creative and cost-effective deployment of a variety of marketing channels</p>	<p>Samples of communication collateral developed, produced and distributed</p>	<p>Approved by the relevant internal client/s</p>	

4. Build and sustain the positive reputation of the department through effective two-way communication						
KEY RESULT AREA	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	QUALITY REQUIREMENTS	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ENABLING CONDITIONS
4.1 Development to enhance public participation within the department's/province's core functional areas	<p>Development communication is a method of providing communities with information in a manner that enables them to use that information to improve their lives. It is meant to educate communities and improve their quality of life by ensuring that they are informed about and can access required services. It achieves this by using communication methods that are accessible to the majority</p> <p>Elements of development communication are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it is responsive</li> <li>• it relies on feedback</li> <li>• it must be creative and innovative</li> <li>• it uses simple and relevant language</li> <li>• it relies on the community/communities</li> <li>• it promotes bringing people closer to the government</li> </ul> <p>The department or province should develop a communication plan that reflects the development communication approach</p> <p>The plan should identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• priority projects</li> <li>• target audiences</li> <li>• target audience perceptions</li> <li>• reputational legacy issues</li> <li>• key messages per stakeholder set</li> <li>• activity schedule, including comprehensive unmediated, direct face-to-face engagement</li> <li>• follow-up and community feedback channels</li> </ul>	xxx number of projects successfully implemented	<p>Samples of communication collateral developed and distributed for the general public</p> <p>Information provided on the department's/province's services and programmes on the government website</p> <p>Reporting on participation in the Imbizo week programme</p> <p>Number of face-to-face engagements with stakeholders</p>	<p>Approved by client business units within the department/province</p> <p>Pre-approval of communication strategy by the GCIS</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback</p>		

4. Build and sustain the positive reputation of the department through effective two-way communication						
KEY RESULT AREA	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	QUALITY REQUIREMENTS	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ENABLING CONDITIONS
4.2 Internal communication programme developed and implemented	<p>The department or province must develop an internal communication plan that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>targeted internal audiences</li> <li>key messages per targeted audience</li> <li>comprehensive activity schedule</li> <li>performance measurement criteria e.g. employee communication audits</li> <li>budget</li> </ul> <p>The delivery of communication content can take place via planned channels e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>regular engagement by senior management</li> <li>staff publications</li> <li>intranet</li> <li>employee briefings</li> <li>notice boards</li> <li>e-mail</li> <li>memos</li> <li>events</li> </ul>	100% of the internal communication plan implemented	<p>Examples of the communication collateral produced and distributed</p> <p>Number of employee briefings undertaken</p>	<p>Approved by client business units within the department/ province</p> <p>Internal communication audits among staff to serve as benchmarks and evaluation measures</p>		

5. Effective management of “unplanned” and urgent communication

KEY RESULT AREA	5. Effective management of “unplanned” and urgent communication			ENABLING CONDITIONS
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	QUALITY REQUIREMENTS	TARGET	EVIDENCE	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
<p>5.1 Crisis communication on behalf of the department/ province effectively managed</p>	<p>The management of crisis communication within the department/ province must be conducted in alignment with the crisis and issue management guidelines and policy of GCIS</p> <p>It would comprise the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• established and rehearsed Crisis Management Team at departmental level</li> <li>• issue management spokesperson training for at least three departmental frontline staff</li> <li>• clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, including all escalation requirements/possibilities</li> <li>• stakeholder lists for crisis communication</li> <li>• policy on response times and holding statements within first hour of crisis</li> <li>• media logs and public enquiries</li> <li>• call centres and websites</li> <li>• approval processes for releases and other communication material clearly articulated and streamlined</li> <li>• post-crisis follow-up and analysis for learning and institutional memory</li> </ul>	<p>All crisis communication situations managed effectively and in line with GCIS guidelines</p>	<p>Comprehensive Crisis Communication Report, including implementation of recommendations</p>	<p>Approved by the GCIS</p>

### 16.3. Editorial Style Guide



# Editorial Style Guide

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Golden rules for government communicators</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Checklists for various forms of writing</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 Writing a communication strategy	2
2.2 Writing articles	3
2.3 Writing reports	3
2.4 Writing proposals	4
2.5 Writing minutes	4
2.6 Writing business correspondence	4
2.6.1 Business letters	4
2.6.2 Memos	5
2.6.3 E-mail	5
<b>3. Using plain language</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Don't assume your reader will understand what you know	5
3.2 Write as you speak	5
3.3 Planning before your write	5
3.4 Principles of writing in plain language	6
<b>4. Principles of English grammar</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1 Parts of speech	6
4.1.1 Noun	6
4.1.2 Pronoun	6
4.1.3 Adjective	7
4.1.4 Verbs and tenses	7
4.1.5 Adverb	8
4.1.6 Preposition	8
4.1.7 Conjunction	8
4.1.8 Article	8
4.2 Verb agreement (concord)	8
4.3 Punctuation	9
4.3.1 Apostrophes	9
4.3.2 Commas, colons and semi-colons	9
4.3.3 Hyphens and dashes	10
4.4. The correct form	10
4.4.1 The capital letter	10
4.4.2 Surnames	12
4.4.3 Bullets	12

4.4.4 Dates, times, initials, numbers, addresses and measurements	12
<b>5. A to Z guide</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>6. Word lists</b>	<b>26</b>
6.1 Words often misspelled	25
6.2 Redundancies	32
6.3 Common abbreviations	34

## 1. GOLDEN RULES FOR GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS

- Produce well-researched information based on facts.
- Check all facts, figures, dates, citations, titles, initials and the spelling of names.
- Your writing should be brief and clear. Use direct expressions and avoid unnecessary words and phrases. Use the correct word order to avoid ambiguity. Punctuate sentences correctly.
- Government publications should provide a balanced presentation without bias, distortion, undue emphasis or omission. Any defamatory information based on hearsay, unsubstantiated allegations or claims is prohibited.
- Defamatory, racist, gender-insensitive, blasphemous or offensive material is prohibited.
- In reporting and commenting, all government publications should be fair, honest and considerate.
- Use short sentences and simple language that everybody can understand.
- Use simple vocabulary: *help* not *assist*, *often* not *frequently*, *use* not *utilise*.
- Do not copy text from other sources without acknowledging the source. Always acknowledge the source or original report you are referring to.
- All sources of information, unless stated otherwise, must always be acknowledged.
- In any piece of writing, bear in mind the five *Ws* and an *H* (*what, where, who, when, why* and *how*). Answer these questions to make sure you have covered everything.
- The introduction must be brief and logical – and less than 30 words.
- Use *the* to precede a noun when referring to a specific or known instance: *the former President of South Africa, Mr Nelson Mandela*.
- Avoid redundant words that repeat what the initial words stand for: *ATM machine, HIV virus, PIN numbers, ID document, etc.*
- In formal or official writing, write out words in full: *was not* instead of *wasn't*.
- Avoid using gender-sensitive words. Use *Ms* instead of *Miss* and *Mrs*, *chairperson* instead of *chairman* and *chairwoman/lady*, and *spokesperson* instead of *spokesman*.
- Spell out all abbreviations the first time you use them, with the abbreviation in brackets; and abbreviate thereafter. Use capital letters for abbreviations (e.g. *CSIR, HSRC*), but upper and lower case for acronyms (e.g. *Nepad, Cosatu*). Note that there are exceptions to this rule (e.g. *AsgiSA, dplg, AIDS* etc.).
- Spell out numbers from one to nine; use figures from 10 upward. Write decimal and negative numbers as numerals: *3,3* and *-4*.
- Do not begin a sentence with a numeral: either spell out the number or rewrite the sentence to move the number from the beginning. Hyphenate written-out numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine. Do not hyphenate *one hundred, two hundred*, etc.
- Use numerals with *million* (*The deal was worth R4 million*), but use a hyphen when it is used adjectivally (*It was a R4-million deal*).
- No space between number and % e.g. 5%
- Use a space, not commas, to indicate thousands: *20 000*.

- Double-check your work for correct spelling and punctuation.
- Use double quotation marks. “...” For quotes within a quote, use double outer quotation marks and single inner quotes.
- Reported speech is written in the past tense.
- Avoid using too many adjectives and adverbs. These may be used to a limited extent in subjective stories or essays, usually published under a byline (e.g. in internal newsletters), but not in official brochures, posters, etc.
- Avoid redundant phrases or words such as *begin to be seen to*, *basically*, *in terms of*, *essentially*, *in accordance with*, etc.
- All titles (e.g. *Dr*, *Mr*, *Ms*, *Rev.* etc.) must be acknowledged at all times.
- *Mr*, *Mrs*, *Miss* and *Dr* do not take a full stop because the last letter is also the last letter of the title. Titles like *Prof.* and *Rev.* do take a full stop because the word is cut off in the middle.
- Words from languages other than South Africa’s 11 official languages must be written in italics.
- Use British, not American, spelling (e.g. *apologise* not *apologize*, *programme* not *program*, *centre* not *center*).
- Every sentence must have a verb. Sentences can be active or passive, e.g. *The professor teaches the students* (active); *The students were taught by the professor* (passive). Try to use active verbs where possible.

#### **Standard reference tools**

*South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2002)

## **2. CHECKLISTS FOR VARIOUS FORMS OF WRITING**

### **2.1 Writing a communication strategy**

The following is the official format for writing a communication strategy:

- background
- objectives
- environment
- communication challenges
- messages and themes
- messengers, audiences and channels, types of event
- a phased communication programme
- structures and processes
- action plan, including budget implications.

Use decimal numbering. Indent subcategories such as *1.1*, with a further indentation for subsequent subcategories, such as *1.1.2*. After this level, use *a*, *b*, *c* or *bullets*. This allows for easier reference. The complete guideline on strategising for communication is available from the GCIS Project Desk.

## 2.2 Writing articles

A successful article includes:

- a clear introductory paragraph that answers the five *Ws* and an *H* (*what, where, who, when, why* and *how*). Keep it short.
- a coherent and logical development of ideas
- the correct facts and details
- simple language and sentences
- a powerful concluding paragraph that draws together the main ideas
- a readable layout
- perfect grammar and spelling.

## 2.3 Writing reports

A report is always written for a specific audience and has a definite purpose. Reports are often used to help in decision-making.

Reports:

- have clearly defined sections
- are clearly and logically written and organised
- are objective and use a formal, impersonal style
- are based on careful research and facts
- do not use:
  - abbreviated grammar
  - first-person reporting (*I, me, we.*)
  - colloquialisms or slang
  - jargon
  - opinions.

The traditional format of reports is as follows:

- title page
- terms of reference (brief)
- summary of the report
- table of contents
- introduction listing the background and the aims
- main text of the report
- findings
- conclusion
- recommendations
- list of sources consulted
- appendices.

## **2.4 Writing proposals**

A proposal is similar to a report, but a proposal is a document to motivate or persuade the reader.

The format of a preliminary proposal is usually:

- a statement of the problem and objectives
- methods to be used and recommendations
- projected costs.

The traditional format of a full proposal is the following:

- title page
- table of contents
- summary of the proposal
- background to the research
- proposed action to be taken
- project budget
- schedule of work with time frames and deadlines
- evaluation of the success of the project
- appendices.

## **2.5 Writing minutes**

Minutes are not a verbatim account of proceedings, but a written record of decisions taken. They may serve as a legal document and should therefore be accurate. Minutes ensure that proposed actions and responsibilities are recorded and should have an action and deadline column.

Minutes should:

- Be concise (without being too brief).
- Cover all the major points discussed.
- Be objective and factual. They should not contain opinions about matters or people.
- Be accurate, so that there can be no argument or misinterpretation.
- Be detailed regarding all contracts and financial matters, appointments to positions, authorised actions and resolutions passed.
- Be written in the past tense.
- Have a list of actions to be taken and by whom, as well as decisions made, at the end of the minutes.

## **2.6 Writing business correspondence**

Business correspondence is often the only communication people have with an organisation. Any written communication serves as a legal document. Correspondence includes business letters, memos and e-mail.

### **2.6.1 Business letters**

- Use simple language and short sentences and paragraphs.
- Ideas must flow logically. Give a clear, sensible subject line and put the most important information first.

- Never use jargon, clichés or abbreviations.
- Do not rely on your spellchecker – always read the documents through and check for errors.

#### 2.6.2 Memos

- Memos are used internally to pass on information and request action, or serve as a record or reminder.
- They follow a fixed format.
- Memos use clear writing and a friendly tone, without being colloquial.

#### 2.6.3 E-mail

- Give a suitable subject line.
- Use full sentences.
- Confirm with recipients whether they want an attachment e-mailed.
- Print all messages that have instructions or policy decisions.
- Double check if people received their e-mail.

### 3. USING PLAIN LANGUAGE

#### 3.1 Do not assume your reader will understand what you know

You must guide your readers through the information you give them and point out what is relevant to them. Do not just refer to graphs, tables or pictures in the document. Your readers will not give them more than a quick glance unless you point out what is relevant, interesting or important about them.

#### 3.2 Write as you speak

This does not mean you should use slang, bad grammar or poor English, but you can use a more personal tone to address your readers. By using personal references such as *we* and *you*, readers will feel that you are talking to them personally. If you use words that are too difficult for or not familiar to your readers, you will frighten them off or make them feel inadequate.

#### 3.3 Plan before your write

Plan what you are going to write before you start. The more you plan, the more organised and effective your writing will be.

Asking questions is a good way to plan:

#### Who am I writing for?

- Who are my readers? Look at factors such as age, gender, culture and education.
- What do they need to know?
- Do I need to address problems they might have with the information?
- Will they understand the technical terms I use?

- What is their attitude to the topic?
- Have I answered all their questions?

#### **Why am I writing?**

- What am I trying to achieve with my writing?
- Will I be able to achieve my aim with the information I have or do I need to gather more information?
- What response do I want from my readers when they finish reading my document?
- Will my readers be clear about what I want when they finish reading my document?

#### **What is the most important point?**

- What is the most important thing I want my readers to know?
- Am I clear about the central issue of my document?
- Am I going to overload my readers if I give them all the details of my research?
- Can I cut out some of the information?
- What is the one thing I want my readers to remember?

### **3.4 Principles of writing in plain language**

- Write informative headings.
- Use plain words.
- Avoid jargon and clichés.
- Minimise acronyms and abbreviations. If you want to use an abbreviation or acronym, write out the word in full and put the contracted term in brackets after it, or use a glossary.
- Get rid of needless words.
- Use the active voice.
- Use strong verbs.
- Write short sentences and paragraphs.

## **4. PRINCIPLES OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR**

### **4.1 Parts of speech**

#### **4.1.1 Noun**

A word used for naming objects such as people, animals, places or things: *Harry, cat, dog, store, ladder.*

#### **4.1.2 Pronoun**

A word taking the place of a noun and used to refer to a person or thing without giving a name: *he, she, them, him, it.*

#### 4.1.3 Adjective

A word used to describe a noun or pronoun: *beautiful, old, oily, big*. An adjective is a describing word.

#### 4.1.4 Verbs and tenses

A word used to describe an action or existence: *is, are, was, kicked, run, have*. A verb is a doing word.

There are different types of verbs:

##### 4.1.4.1 Normal verbs

Most verbs are “normal verbs”. These verbs are usually physical actions that you can see somebody doing. They can be used in all tenses.

Examples: *to run, to walk, to eat, to fly, to go, to say, to touch*.

- I **eat** dinner every day.
- I **am eating** dinner now.
- I **ate** dinner at 6pm yesterday.
- I **was eating** dinner when there was a knock at the door.

##### 4.1.4.2 Non-continuous verbs

These verbs are things you cannot see somebody doing. For example, *to be, to want, to cost, to seem, to need, to care, to contain, to owe, to exist, to have, to own, to belong, to like*.

Using non-continuous verbs correctly:

- He **is needing** help now. **WRONG**
- He **needs** help now. **RIGHT**
- He **is wanting** a drink now. **WRONG**
- He **wants** a drink now. **RIGHT**

##### 4.1.4.3 Mixed verbs

Mixed verbs are verbs that have more than one meaning, depending on whether they are used as non-continuous verbs or as normal verbs.

For example:

*to have:*

- I **have** a lot of things to do. (Non-continuous verb)

*THERE ARE MANY THINGS I NEED TO DO.*

- I **am having** fun now. (Normal verb)

*I AM EXPERIENCING FUN.*

*to look:*

- The minister **looks** tired. (Non-continuous verb)

*THE MINISTER SEEMS TIRED*

- Faraaz **is looking** at the pictures. (Normal verb)

*SHE IS LOOKING AT THE PICTURES WITH HER EYES.*

*to see:*

- I **see** her. (Non-continuous verb)

*I SEE HER WITH MY EYES*

- I **am seeing** a lawyer. (Normal verb)

*I AM VISITING OR CONSULTING WITH A LAWYER. (ALSO USED WITH DENTIST AND DOCTOR.)*

- I **am seeing** her. (Normal verb)

*I AM HAVING A RELATIONSHIP WITH HER.*

- He **is seeing** ghosts. (Normal verb)

*HE SEES SOMETHING OTHERS CANNOT SEE. FOR EXAMPLE, GHOSTS, AURAS, A VISION OF THE FUTURE, ETC.*

*to think:*

- He **thinks** the test is easy. (Non-continuous verb)

*HE CONSIDERS THE TEST TO BE EASY.*

- She **is thinking** about the question. (Normal verb)

*SHE IS PONDERING THE QUESTION.*

#### 4.1.5 Adverb

A word used to describe or tell you more about the verb: *faster, slowly, very, soon.*

#### 4.1.6 Preposition

A word used for showing what one person or thing has to do with another person or thing, usually where they are in relation to one another: *with, under, on, above, in, beside.*

#### 4.1.7 Conjunction

A word used to join words and clauses: *and, but, when, while, therefore.*

#### 4.1.8 Article

Use the definite article *the* to precede a noun, implying a specific or known instance. Use the indefinite article *a* before a consonant sound: *a lovely day, a hotel, a union.* Use the indefinite article *an* before a vowel sound: *an African trip, an heir, an FA Cup final.*

### 4.2 Verb agreement (concord)

Singular subjects have singular verbs, and plural subjects have plural verbs: *The man is working, but the men are working.* However, not all sentences are that simple. Fortunately, there are some easy rules to follow.

- (i) Two nouns joined by *and* are followed by a plural verb: *The politician and the farmer **have** arrived* i.e. two people have arrived. If you were to write *The politician and farmer has arrived*, it implies that one person, who is both a politician and a farmer, has arrived.

- (ii) Collective nouns (*army, crew, herd, team, committee, group*) take a singular verb if the collection is thought of as a whole. It is not, however, wrong to use a plural verb. As a guide to deciding which form to use, decide whether you want to emphasise the unit or the individuals who make up the unit: *The South African cricket team is going to Australia* i.e. one team is going to Australia, however, *The South African team were unanimous in their condemnation of Australian umpiring*, i.e. all the members of the team agreed that the umpiring was bad.
- (iii) Two or more singular nouns joined by *or* or *nor* are followed by a singular verb: *Peter or Bill is going to pay*.
- (iv) When a singular and plural noun are joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb takes its number from the noun next to it: *Either the workers or the supervisor is wrong* (*supervisor* is singular, so you must use *is*); *Neither Mr Jones nor the boys were there* (*boys* is plural so you must use *were*).
- (v) *Each, every, either, neither, nobody, everything, anybody* and *everybody* all imply one thing and, as such, take singular verbs: *Every worker receives his or her wages*; *Nobody is able to answer*.
- (vi) *Much* and *little* are singular; *many* and *few* are plural: *Much time is wasted on petty details*; *Only a few were willing to take the plunge*.
- (vii) Plural nouns denoting a whole usually take singular verbs: *R1 000 is a large sum of money*.
- (viii) *None* means no one, and is singular: *No one is going to take responsibility*.
- (ix) A verb preceded by *to*, as in *to like*, is called an infinitive verb. Do not split infinitives: *He really seems to like it*, not *He seems to really like it*.

## 4.3 Punctuation

### 4.3.1 Full stops

Do not use full stops in abbreviations: USA, UN.

Do not use full stops after initials: NR Mandela.

### 4.3.2 Apostrophes

Apostrophes (') are often misused. Apostrophes should be used in the following ways:

- To show possession (singular): *the cat's whiskers, the boss's view*; (plural): *business partners' investment; provinces' MECs*.
- To show that a letter has been left out: *don't* (contraction of *do not*), *it's* (contraction of *it is*).
- To show time or quantity: *one month's notice, five metres' worth of fabric*.

When NOT to use an apostrophe:

- In words that are not contracted: *Whose package is most profitable?* Not *Who's package is most profitable?*; *Its campaigns help create jobs*, not *It's campaigns help create jobs*.
- To show the plural of letters and words: *There are two ns in Johannesburg* (not *n's*); *These are the dos and don'ts of writing* (not *do's* and *don't's*).
- For decades: *1990s* not *1990's*.
- Plurals: *Ptys* not *Pty's*; *photos* not *photo's*; *SMSs* not *SMS's*.

#### 4.3.3 Commas, colons and semi-colons

Use commas (,) to:

- separate items in a list
- separate a phrase that explains what went before
- avoid ambiguities.

Use a colon (:) to introduce a list of items or bullet points: *I will ensure that our services have the appropriate:*

- *focus*
- *integrity*
- *professionalism.*

Use commas to separate items in a simple list (e.g. *the ocean, deserts, mountains and grasslands*), but use semi-colons (;) to separate items in a list of items which themselves contain commas (e.g. *Our journey took us to Italy, where we discovered the Roman civilisation; Egypt, which introduced us to some of the wonders of pre-history; and Greece, where we explored the early roots of Hellenism*).

#### 4.3.4 Hyphens and dashes

Use hyphens (-) for:

- e-words: *e-mail, e-business, e-commerce*
- compound nouns (where two or more nouns are joined): *buy-out, cost-effectiveness, cross-reference*
- compound adjectives (where two or more adjectives are joined) ONLY where the noun it describes follows it: *cost-effective project* (but *the project was cost effective*), *risk-based portfolio, long-term commitment*.

The following are a few basic guidelines:

- hyphenate compound adjectives: *old-fashioned clothes, so-called champion*
- hyphenate prefixes to proper names: *un-Christian*
- when *pro* means in favour, use a hyphen: *pro-life*
- *non-smoker*
- use a hyphen when writing figures (e.g. *thirty-six, three-quarters*) and between figures in the place of *to* (e.g. *3-12 March*)
- hyphenate titles such as *director-general*
- use a dash to draw attention: *The Budget will rise – from R10 billion to R15 billion – next year.*

See “Words often misspelled” for words that are not hyphenated, including:

- abovementioned
- postgraduate
- subsection.

When NOT to use a hyphen:

- When compound adjectives do not come before the noun they refer to: *day-to-day problems* but *from day to day*, higher-rate tax but the higher the rate of tax, *long-term insurance* but *in the long term*, *up-to-date system* but *keep up to date*.
- After an adverb ending in -ly: e.g. *widely read report*.

#### 4.3.5 Question marks

These are used only after actual questions: "Is it raining?"; "Are you coming?" No question mark in: He asked if I was coming.

### 4.4. The correct form

#### 4.4.1 The capital letter

Capital letters are used to indicate a specific as opposed to a common object; a particular example (*African Hoopoe*), as opposed to a class of things (*bird*). The modern journalistic trend is to use capitals as sparingly as possible. When in doubt, DO NOT capitalise.

Capitals are used in the following cases:

- At the beginning of a sentence.
- After a question mark or an exclamation mark: *Goodness! Now what?*
- For the names of people: *Lerato, Wilson*.
- For the names of places: *Asia, Sunnyside, KwaZulu-Natal*.
- For the names of nations, languages and historical events: *The French speak a Romanic language; The Battle of Britain*.
- For the names of days and months, religious festivals and other holidays: *Tuesday, May, Good Friday, Workers' Day, Women's Month*.
- For the full titles of people, ranks, offices, countries and buildings: *Attorney-General, Directorate of Public Prosecutions, President, Union Buildings, the Department of Education* (but education department).
- For personal titles when they come before a name: *Mr Nkosi, Dr Khoza, Ms Khan, Prof. Jones* (but *Jones, a professor of political studies*).
- Titles that precede and are part of names. Titles that follow names or stand by themselves should be lower case. E.g. *President Jacob Zuma, Chief Justice Sandile Ngcobo*, (but *the chief executive officer, the minister, the directors, the chairperson*).
- Names of religious denominations, and nouns, pronouns and adjectives used to designate the Supreme Being in any religion: *Methodist, Catholic Church, Christianity, Muslim, Hindu*, etc.
- Ethnic names and nationalities derived from the name of a continent: *African, Indian*.
- Names of political parties, but not the same words when used in a general sense: *Republican Party, Mr John Nkosi is a Republican/Democrat* (but *republican system and democratic ideologies*).
- The names of academic subjects: *Maths, Science, Botany, Sports and Recreation*.

Do not capitalise the following:

- *former, ex-*, or *-elect* when used with titles: *former Telkom boss, ex-president Mandela, president-elect*
- point of compass (north, south, east, west)
- seasons of the year (*spring, summer, autumn, winter*)
- occupational titles: *teacher, nurse, lawyer, doctor*.

For animals and species

- Use initial capitals for multi-word specific names: Burchell's Zebra, African Elephant, Blue Wildebeest, Cape Robin.
- Do not use an initial capital for generic names of animals of which there are a number of species: zebra, elephant, wildebeest, robin.
- Do not use an initial capital for species with single-word specific names: giraffe, kudu, eland.
- When both classes of words appear in a single list, place the capitalised names at the beginning of the list and the non-capitalised names together at the end: *We saw Blue Wildebeest, Burchell's Zebra, elephant, impala, kudu and eland drinking at the waterhole.*

#### 4.4.2 Surnames

Surnames such as *De Klerk*, *Van Rensburg* and *Van der Merwe* are not capitalised if they are used with the first name or initials of the person, e.g. *FW de Klerk* or *Ms HF van Rensburg*; but if the surname is used at the beginning of a sentence, or on its own, then it should be capitalised, e.g. *Last year, De Klerk addressed the panel.*

#### 4.4.3 Bullets

When using bullet-points, every item in the list should follow logically and grammatically from the lead sentence and every list should follow the same grammatical structure. Capitalise the first letter of each bullet if it contains separate sentences, and end each bullet sentence with a full stop. E.g.:

*Specialist institutes:*

- *The ARC-Agrimetrics Institute provides an integrated biometric and datametric service. It includes the planning of experiments, a wide spectrum of statistical advice and analyses, as well as the interpretation of the processed results. This is supported and enhanced by an electronic data-processing service and the development and maintenance of a scientific database and data system.*
- *The ARC-Institute for Soil, Climate and Water promotes the characterisation, sustainable use and protection of natural resources.*

Do not capitalise when bullets are not a full sentence.

Do not use semi-colons, commas or full stops at the end of each bullet sentence.

Do not insert "and" after the second-last bullet sentence. The last bullet gets a full stop. E.g.:

*These include access to:*

- *a range of payment options*
- *a high-quality service with quick turnaround time between application and first payments*
- *information regarding the full range of welfare services offered in South Africa.*

#### 4.4.4 Dates, times, initials, numbers, addresses and measurements

- Use the following abbreviations: *in 30 BC*, *player No 7*, *on January 21*.
- *Tuesday, 27 April 2008* (not *Tuesday, April 27, 2008* or *Tuesday, 27th April 2008*).
- In numbered addresses, abbreviate *Street (St)*, *Road (Rd)*, *Avenue (Ave)*, *Boulevard (Blvd)*,

*Crescent (Cres), etc: Our offices are at 21 Main St, but They live in Main Street.*

- Write out and capitalise streets with numbers as names: *21 Fifth St, 53 Third Ave.*
- Numerical plurals do not take an apostrophe: *1970s, the mid-1990s.*
- Write time as *11:45.*
- Do not abbreviate measurements unless used with figures: *45km, 126ml.* Never use plurals (*kms, mms, kgs*). Use a decimal comma in *2,3kg* or *15,75ml.*
- Write millions and billions out in full: *R26 million.* Write out cents, as in *The toy costs 99 cents.*
- Write *per cent* as two words, as in *60 per cent.*

## 5. A TO Z GUIDE

### A

**abbreviations.** Write out the first instance in each chapter/section, with the abbreviation in brackets; thereafter use the abbreviation only (except in headings). When abbreviating names of organisations, use the abbreviation only after the full name has been used first: *The headquarters of the United Nations (UN) is in New York. The UN, the international body, announced that ...* Plurals of abbreviations are written without an apostrophe: *MECs, MPLs, SGBs, NGOs.*

**about.** Use in place of *approximately, in the region of or around.*

**Act.** When used in the legislative sense, the first letter is always capitalised: *The Act provides for ...* When mentioned for the first time, the Act must be named in full: *the Revenue Laws Amendment Act, 2003 (Act 45 of 2003), was recently signed into law* (note the comma after the last bracket).

**action.** This is a noun, not a verb. You do not action something, you *do it, or carry it out, or implement it.*

**advice, advise.** *Advice* is a noun: *I will ask for her advice.* *Advise* is a verb: *I will advise her what to do.*

**adviser.** Not *advisor.*

**affect, effect.** *Affect* is a verb meaning to make a difference to: *The decision did not affect the outcome.* *Effect* is both a noun, meaning a change that something causes in something else, and a verb, meaning to make something happen: *The decision has a significant effect* (noun); to effect changes (verb).

**African** (upper-case initial), Indian, but coloured, black and white (lower-case initials).

**African Renaissance** (upper-case initials).

**ages.** Should always be given in figures. Hyphenate *The 40-year-old unionist*, but don't hyphenate *He was 40 years old.*

**AIDS.** Upper case, as is HIV.

**all of the.** Use *all the, all, or every.*

**all right.** Always use *all right*, written as two words; not *alright.*

**allude, elude.** *Allude* means to mention indirectly: *allude to a book.* *Elude* means to escape: *elude pursuers.*

**alternate, alternative.** *Alternate* (adjective) means going back and forth between two things, as in

*alternate weekends* (every other weekend). Alternative means “other” and applies when there are two opinions, as in an *alternative plan*.

**among, between.** Use *among* for more than two people or things and *between* for two people or things. Avoid *amongst*.

**and/or.** Avoid using, except in a legal document.

**anticipate, expect.** *Anticipate* means foresee or regard as possible yet not sure, such as *rain*. If you *expect* something, you are sure about it happening, such as *expecting a visitor*.

**antiretroviral** (one word).

**apartheid** (lower-case initial).

**appendices** (the plural of appendix).

**approximately.** Use *about*.

**archaeologist.**

**as.** Do not use *as* for *because*: *He left because he was tired* not *He left as he was tired*.

**as yet.** Use *yet*, not *as yet*.

**Asian** (adjective and noun). Upper case. Refers to people or products from Asia.

**assure, ensure, insure.** You *assure* (promise) a person that things will go well (instill confidence). You *ensure* (make sure) that work is done. You *insure* (guarantee or protect) something against loss or damage.

**ATM.** Stands for automated teller machine, therefore don't write *ATM machine*.

**averse, adverse.** If you do not like something, you are *averse* (opposed) to it. *Adverse* (bad) is an adjective, as in *adverse conditions*.

**avocados.**

## B

**backlog** (one word).

**basically, essentially, totally.** Avoid. These do not add any meaning to a sentence.

**belief** (noun), **believe** (verb). *It is my belief that it will rain tomorrow; I believe in God.*

**benefit, benefiting, benefited** (single *t*).

**besides, beside.** *Besides* means in addition to, apart from, moreover or other than. *Beside* means next to.

**biannual, biennial.** *Biannual* refers to something occurring twice a year or half-yearly. *Biennial* means occurring every two years.

**bid, bade.** *Bid* refers to an offer, and the past tense is *bade*.

**Big Five** (upper-case initials).

**bilateral** (one word).

**Bill** (upper-case initial).

**binational** (one word).

**black people.** lower-case *b*.

**Black Economic Empowerment (BEE).**

**British spelling throughout.** Use *-ise* not *-ize*, *metre* not *meter* (except for *water meter*), *colour* not *color*, etc.

**BuaNews.** Always write as one word with a capital *n*. Word should be written in normal font and not italics.

**Budget.** Use upper-case initial when referring to the national Budget or the Budget Speech.

**bushveld.**

**by the fact that.** Avoid. Instead of *I am surprised by the fact that the report is incomplete*, write *I am surprised the report is incomplete*.

## C

**Cabinet** (upper-case initial).

**can, may.** *Can* (past tense: *could*) expresses ability: *She can play the piano*. *May* expresses permission: *You may leave early*. *Might* expresses possibility: *It might rain*.

**canvas, canvass.** *Canvas* (noun) is a type of cloth. *Canvass* (verb) means to visit someone to ask for their vote.

**cellphone** (one word).

**centre** (not *center*).

**century.** Use lower-case *c*: *19th century*.

**certainly.** Try to avoid using.

**chairperson.** Use in place of *chairman*, *chairwoman* or *chairlady*.

**close corporation (CC).** Not closed

**coloured people, coloureds** (lower-case initials).

**communication, communications.** *Communication* refers to written, spoken or non-verbal communication, whereas *communications* refers to technological communication.

**compared to, compared with.** *Compared to* expresses similarities: *Compare the landscape to a Monet painting*. *Compared with* assesses the relation or difference between things: *Compare radio with television*.

**complement, compliment.** To *complement* means to add to or bring out the best in something: *Fish and tartare sauce complement each other*. *Compliment* means to praise, and *complimentary* means something given away for free.

**comprise.** Use *comprise(s)* and not *comprises of*. e.g. *The Olympic team comprises 90 athletes*.

**comprising, including.** *Comprising* is used when all the components of the whole are mentioned. *Including* does not presume that everything has been mentioned.

**consequent, subsequent.** *Consequent* refers to the result or logical conclusion of something. *Subsequent* refers to the events immediately following something.

**Constitution.** Use a capital letter, but do not capitalise *constitutional*.

**continual, continuous.** *Continual* means happening over and over again. *Continuous* means happening constantly without interruption.

**cooperate** (one word).

**coordinate** (one word).

**cornerstone** (one word).

**cost-effective.**

**countrywide** (one word).

**criteria.** Takes the plural. *Criterion* is the singular. You can have one criterion or several criteria.

**critique.** It is a noun, not a verb.

**currency.** Upper-case initial when written out and preceded by *the: Dollar, Rand, Euro*. No space between abbreviation and the figure: *R500*.

**currently.** Use *currently* or *now* instead of *presently, at this point in time, at this juncture, at the present moment* or *at this point*.

## D

**darkroom** (one word).

**data.** Takes the singular. *The data is complete*.

**dates.** 16 June 1976; 1990s.

**daycare** (one word).

**D-Day.**

**deaf.** Rather use *hearing impaired* or *hearing challenged*.

**decimal commas.** Use decimal commas, not points: *R300,45* not *R300.45*.

**degrees.** Use the degree symbol: 40° C or 30°S.

**Democratic Republic of Congo** (not *the Congo*).

**denotation. connotation.** *Denotation* is the exact meaning. *Connotation* is the implied meaning.

**Department, department.** When referring to a specific department by its correct title, e.g. *Department of Justice and Constitutional Development*, use upper-case initials. When referring to a department generically or in the plural, use lower case: *the justice department, the departments of labour and of education*.

**dependant, dependent.** *Dependant* (noun) means a person who is *dependent* (adjective) on someone else.

**director-general.** Plural: directors-general.

**disabled.** People with disabilities.

**disinterested, uninterested.** *Disinterested* means unbiased or neutral about an issue. *Uninterested* means not interested.

**downscaling, downsizing** (one word).

**due to.** Use *owing to* or *because of*. *The prices have escalated because of increased demand*.

## E

**each other, one another.** Two people talk to *each other*; more than two talk to *one another*.

**Earth.** Upper-case initial when referring to Earth, the planet; lower case when referring to the soil: *tilling the earth*.

**economic, economical.** *Economic* is used in relation to finances and cost. *Economical* refers to giving good value or avoiding wastage.

**educators.** Not teachers.

**e.g. and i.e.** *E.g.* stands for the Latin *exempli gratia*, meaning *for example*; *i.e.* is for the Latin *idest*, meaning “that is”.

**elections.** Use instead of *polls*.

**endeavours.**

**enquiry, inquiry.** *Enquire* is a formal word for ask; *Inquire* is used for an investigation. However, for simplicity, it is acceptable to use only *enquire*.

**etc.** Use with a full stop after and a comma before.

**every day, everyday.** *Everyday* (adjective) means occurring every day, not out of the ordinary: *An everyday event happens every day.*

## F

**farm workers.**

**farther, further.** Use *farther* for physical distance and *further* to mean additional or continued: *travel farther* but pursue an *issue further*.

**fewer, less.** Use *fewer* with numbers of items or people: *Fewer than 10 delegates attended. Less* refers to quantity: *Less than half the delegates arrived.*

**First Economy.**

**first world.**

**focus, focused, focusing.** One *s*.

**formula, formulae.** Use *formulae* not *formulas* as the plural of *formula*.

**fractions.** Hyphenate fractions: *two-thirds*.

**fulfil.** But *fulfilled, fulfilling*

**fully.** *Fully fledged programme.* Don't use a hyphen because of the *-ly*.

## G

**G5** (no hyphens).

**G8** (no hyphens).

**GCIS.** Government Communication and Information System. There is no *s* suffix on Communication and System. A shorter version can be used: *Government Communications (GCIS)*.

*Glamorous, **Not glamorous.***

**go-ahead.** The department has received the go-ahead ...

**gold mining, gold mines, but goldfields.**

**Gospel, gospel.** Capitalise when referring to the Bible, use lower case when using as an adjective: *The gospel singer reads the Gospel every night.*

**government.** Use lower-case initial in all cases except when referring specifically to *the Government: the South African Government*, but *government projects*.

**grassroots** (one word).

**gross domestic product (GDP).**

**ground-breaking.**

## H

**hectar (ha).** Space between number and abbreviation: 700 ha.

**he or she** and **his or her.** Using *they* instead of *he or she* and *their* for *his or her* is grammatically incorrect.

**head.** People *head* committees, they do not *head up* committees. Use lower-case initials for *head of department* (HoD).

**headings.** First initial upper case, all other words in heading lower case, except names: *Arts and culture, National symbols*, but *Department of Arts and Culture*. Do not use abbreviations in headings.

**healthcare** (one word).

**historic, historical.** *Historic* means a significant or important event that will stand out in history: *the historic democratic election*. *Historical* refers to any past occurrence.

**HIV** (upper case).

**HIV and AIDS.** Not *HIV/AIDS*.

**home owner.** But *home-owner's allowance*.

**honorary.** *Honorary degree*, not *honourary degree*.

**human-resource development (HRD).** Not resources; use lower-case initials.

**HRD Strategy.**

## I

**immunise.**

**in-depth.**

**Indian** (noun or adjective). Upper case.

**informal settlement.** Use in place of *squatter camp*.

**information and communications technology (ICT).** Lower-case initials.

**information technology (IT).** Lower-case initials.

**Install.** But *instalment*

**Instil.** Rather use *among other things*.

**interactive.**

**interdepartmental.**

**interdependent.**

**intergovernmental.**

**Internet** (upper-case initial).

**intra-racial.**

**intra-sectorial.**

**-ise, -ize.** Use *-ise* for all words spelt with *-ize*: *organise* not *organize*.

**italics.** Should be used sparingly to emphasise the meaning of words. Always use for non-South African words and phrases; titles of publications, songs and movies; green and white papers; law-suits; website addresses; and the names of ships, aircraft and spacecraft.

**its, it's.** *It's* is a contraction of *it is*: *It's hot today*. *Its* is a possessive meaning of *it*. *Among its various provisions, the Constitution ensures equal rights for all*.

## J

**JSE Securities Exchange Limited (JSE).** This is the official name.

**jewellery.**

**judgment, judgement.** *The driver's judgement was impaired by alcohol; The court's judgement is due in two weeks.*

## K

**kick off.** Soccer events and projects *kick off*, but conferences and campaigns *open, begin or start*.

**kilometre** (km). Not the American *kilometer*. Space between the figure and the *km*: *3 000km*.

Never use *kms*.

**knobkierie.**

**knock-and-drop.**

**knockout** (boxing).

**KwaZulu-Natal** (with a hyphen).

## L

**landowners** (one word).

**land-users** (hyphenated).

**languages.** There are 11 official languages in South Africa:

- Afrikaans
- English
- isiNdebele
- isiXhosa
- isiZulu
- Sesotho sa Leboa (Sepedi)
- Sesotho
- Setswana
- siSwati
- Tshivenda
- Xitsonga.

**lekgotla.** Gathering. Plural: *makgotla*.

**lend, borrow.** You lend something to someone and borrow something from someone: *I lend my pen to you; May I borrow your pen?*

**less, fewer.** *Less* refers to quantity, *fewer* refers to number: *Fewer than 10 delegates attended; Less than half the delegates arrived.*

**letsema.** Communal volunteerism.

**licence** (noun), **license** (verb).

**lifelong.**

**life-size.**

**like.** Avoid using to mean *such as* or *as if*.

**Limpopo.** Not *Limpopo Province*.

**Limpopo River.** But *Limpopo and Orange rivers*.

**line-up, line up.** *The police line-up was delayed; We had to line up to see Oprah.*

**loan, lend.** Use *loan* as the noun and *lend* as the verb. *Lent* is the past tense.

**locally.** No hyphen when used adjectivally because of *-ly*: *locally developed vaccines*.

**longstanding** (one word).

**long-term.** Hyphenate when it's used as an adjective, otherwise write as two words: *long-term investment; In the long term, my finances will be fine.*

**lose, loose.** *I often lose my keys; My shoelace is loose.*

## **M**

**macrobenefits.**

**macroeconomic.**

**maize meal.**

**mangoes.**

**may, might.** *May* expresses both permission and possibility, while *might* expresses only possibility: *May I leave the room? It might rain today.*

**medium (singular), media (plural)**

**media conference.** Covers both print and electronic media.

**Medium Term Budget Policy Statement** and **Medium Term Expenditure Framework.** No hyphens. But *medium-term arrangements*.

**megalitre (ml).** Refers to a million litres.

**Mercosur.** The trading block. Not *MERCOSUR*.

**microlending.**

**millennium.**

**million ton (Mt)**

**Minister.** Capitalise when used as a title: *Minister of Finance, Mr Trevor Manuel*, but *the finance minister*. Also use lower case when the plural is used: *the ministers of health and of communications*.

**ministry, Ministry.** Capitalise only when written out in full: *The Ministry of Justice*, but *the justice ministry* or *the ministry*.

**money,** Plural: *money, not monies*.

**moneylending.**

**Mpumalanga.** Not *Mpumalanga Province*.

**multidimensional.**

**multilingualism.**

**multimedia, multimillion** (one word).

**multitude.** Is a singular concept: *A multitude of ideas is ...*

**myself.** Use only in the reflexive form, as in *I baked the cake myself*. Otherwise, *Pat and I baked the cake*.

## N

**National Budget** (upper-case *n*).

**national Department of Human Settlements** (lower-case *n*).

**nation-building**.

**nationwide**.

**New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad)**.

**newsroom**.

**non-**. The prefix "non" indicates the negative sense of words with which it is combined. Hyphenate, as in *non-smoker*. But *nonentity*.

**non-governmental organisation (NGO)**. Lower-case initials.

**no one** (two words).

**North West** (the province). No hyphens. Not *North West Province*.

**northern hemisphere**. Lower-case initials.

**numbers**. Use words for one to nine, numerals from 10 onwards. Decimal and negative numbers are rendered as numerals. Write out numbers at the beginning of a sentence. For millions, use the numeral: *R4 million*. Hyphenate million only when used adjectivally: *R4,5 million* but *R4,5-million investment*. Use a space for thousands: *R168 050*.

**numerous**. Rather use *many*.

## O

**of, off**. *Of* is a preposition, *off* is an adverb. Avoid mistakenly using *off* as a preposition as in *I picked it up off the floor*.

**one another, each other**. Two people talk to *each other*; more than two talk to *one another*.

**ongoing**.

**online** (one word).

**organise, organisation**. See *-ise*.

**overcrowded** (no hyphen).

**overexpenditure** (no hyphen).

## P

**pandemic**. Use to denote the *global* AIDS problem. Use epidemic to denote the problem in South Africa.

**Parliament, parliament**. *The South African Parliament* or *the Parliament*, but *parliamentary briefings*.

**peacekeeping** (no hyphen).

**per annum (pa)**. In text, use *a year* or *each year*, not *per annum* or *per year*. However, *pa* may be used in tables or where space is limited, provided you explain it in full below or first.

**per cent** (two words).

**peri-urban**.

**PhD**.

**phenomenon** (singular) **phenomena** (plural).  
**plus-minus**. Approximately or about. Do not use  $\pm$ .  
**police, police officer**. Use instead of *policeman, policewoman* or *cop*.  
**post-apartheid**.  
**practice** (noun), **practise** (verb). *At soccer practice we practised our dribbling.*  
The *Presidency* (upper-case initial when referring to the institution) *President's Office* (upper-case initials)  
**President, president**. *President Jacob Zuma* but *our president*, or *the president of a company*.  
**principal, principle**. Use *principal* instead of *headmaster/headmistress*. *Principle* means a moral guideline or fundamental truth.  
**prizewinner** (one word).  
**proactive** (no hyphen).  
**Prof.** (with a full stop).  
**programme, program**. *Programme* on TV or radio, but computer *program*.  
**public service**. Use instead of *civil service*.  
**publications**. Titles of publications go in italics: *Vuk'uzenzele, South Africa Yearbook*, etc.

## Q

**quatercentenary**. 400th anniversary. No *r* between *qua-* and *-tercentenary*.  
**quite, quiet**. *Quite* is an adverb meaning very or fairly, *quiet* is an adjective meaning making little or no noise: *She is quite a quiet person*.

## R

**R500** (no space).  
**race**. *African, Indian* and *Asian* get an upper-case initial; *black, coloured* and *white* are lower case.  
**recently**. Use instead of *yesterday* or *last week*, depending on the degree of urgency.  
**renaissance**. Capitalise only if it is used with *The* and refers to the historic period or the *African Renaissance*.  
**Rev.** (with a full stop). Abbreviation of *Reverend*.  
**ringleader**.  
**role player**. two words. but role-playing game  
**roll out** (verb), **roll-out** (noun).

## S

**savanna**. Also *savannah*.  
**school-leaver**.  
**schoolteacher, schoolmaster, schoolchildren, schoolboy, schoolgirl** (one word).  
**Section 21 company**.  
**Section**. Section of an Act takes an upper-case initial.  
**Sector Education and Training Authority (Seta)**.

**semi-arid.**

**semi-colons.** Use *commas* to separate items in a simple list, but use *semi-colons* to separate items in a list of items which themselves contain *commas*.

**service delivery.** But service-delivery programme.

**service-providers** (hyphenated).

**small, medium and micro-enterprise (SMME).**

**South Africa Yearbook.** *African* is incorrect.

**southern Africa.**

**southern hemisphere** (lower-case initials).

**spokesperson.** Use instead of *spokesman* or *spokeswoman*.

**stakeholders.**

**State, state.** Capitalise when referring to an organised political community under or belonging to or in the interest of one government: *The building belongs to the State, but state visit* or *state-owned*.

**stationary, stationery.** *Stationary* means standing still. *Stationery* is writing material.

**storeroom** (one word).

**subdirector**

**subprogramme.**

**subtropical.**

**sugar cane.**

**supersede.** Not *supercede*.

## T

**talk show** (two words).

**taxpayers** (one word).

**technikons.** Now universities of technology.

**that, which.** Use *that* to introduce a defining clause: *This is the house that Jack built*. Use *which* to introduce a qualifying clause: *This house, which was built by Jack, is up for sale*. As a general rule, where a phrase can be put in parenthesis or between commas, it is introduced by *which*.

**there, their.** *There* is an adverb meaning in, at or to that place. *Their* means belonging to them.

**till, until.** Avoid using *till* as a substitute for *until*.

**time frames** (two words).

**to, too.** *Too* means *also* (*he went too*) or *excessively* (*too much*). *To* is a preposition used to introduce a noun. (*He went to the office*.)

**turnaround** (noun), **to turn around** (verb).

## U

**ubuntu** (Nguni), **botho** (Sotho). Means humanity.

**underprivileged.**

**underqualified.**

**under-resourced** (hyphenated).  
**underserviced**.  
**underused**. Use instead of *underutilised*.  
**underway**.  
**unfazed**.  
**upside down** (not hyphenated).  
**US** (adjective), **USA** (noun).

## V

**very**. Avoid. It has been so overworked it often weakens the sentence rather than strengthening it.  
**voters' roll**.

## W

**webmaster**.  
**website** (one word). For website addresses, use *italics* and exclude *http.www.gov.za*  
**well-being**.  
**whether, weather**. *I do not know whether they have arrived or (whether) they have not; The weather is sunny but cold.* Avoid *whether or not*  
**whether, if**. *Whether* is explained above and *if* introduces a condition: *If you do your homework, you can watch TV.*  
**while**. Avoid the use of *whilst*.  
**White Paper on Arts, Culture** ... Italicise white-paper titles.  
**white people**. lower-case *w*.  
**will**. Avoid the use of *shall*.  
**winegrowers**.  
**winemaking**.  
**withhold**.  
**workforce**.  
**workplace**.  
**worldwide**.  
**wrongdoing**.

## X

**xenophobia**.  
**Xmas**. Do not use as an abbreviation for Christmas.  
**X-ray**.

## Y

**yearbook**.  
**year-end**.

**years.** Financially speaking, use 2009/10. When used adjectivally, hyphenate age: *The 10-year-old boy couldn't swim, but He was 10 years old.*

**yellowwood.**

**yesteryear.**

**yield.**

## **Z**

**zero tolerance.** Hyphenated only when used adjectivally; *zero-tolerance campaign.*

**zookeeper.**

**zoom lens.**

## 6. WORD LISTS

### 6.1 Words often misspelled

#### A

abattoir  
abovementioned  
absolutely  
access  
accidentally  
accommodation  
acquaintance  
acquainted  
acquire  
advice (noun), advise (verb)  
affect (make a difference to)  
anoint  
appearance  
appropriate  
archaeology  
assess

#### B

battalion  
beginning  
belief (a firmly held/religious conviction)  
benefited  
breathe

#### C

campaign  
challenge  
chauffeur  
colossal  
coexist  
combating  
complement (to add to or bring out the best in something)  
compliment (praise)  
concomitant  
conductive

connoisseur  
consciousness  
conscientious  
consensus  
cooperate  
coordinate  
copyright  
cost-benefit  
criticise

**D**

deceive  
definite  
definitely  
descendant  
develop  
diarrhoea  
dietician  
disappoint  
dissatisfaction  
dissipate  
drunkenness  
duel (contest) but dual purpose

**E**

ecstasy  
effect (a change that something causes in something else)  
eligible  
eliminate  
embarrassment  
enrol, enrolment  
entrepreneur  
exacerbate  
exceed  
existence

**F**

fiery  
focuses  
focusing

foreseeable  
forgo  
formerly  
forthcoming  
fulfil  
full-time

## **G**

goodwill  
gynaecology

## **H**

haemorrhage  
harass  
helpline  
homeopath  
homogeneous  
honorary  
humorous  
hygiene  
hypocrisy

## **I**

immediately  
inadvertent  
inauguration  
incidentally  
independent  
indigenous  
innate  
inoculate  
insistent  
irresistible

## **J**

jealous  
judgment  
judgment (more legal)

**K**

ketchup  
knowledgeable  
knuckle  
kwashiorkor

**L**

lead (present tense)  
led (past tense)  
liaison  
lifelong  
life-size  
lose (to no longer have)  
loose (not tight)

**M**

marginalised  
metaphor  
micro-enterprises  
millennium  
miscellaneous  
misdemeanour  
monetary

**N**

nauseous  
necessity  
neighbour  
neglect  
nucleus

**O**

obvious  
occasion  
occurred  
occurrence  
online  
organogram

**P**

parallel  
Parliament  
pastime  
perpetrated  
perseverance  
personnel  
playwright  
possession  
postgraduate  
post-mortem  
preceding  
predominantly  
prejudice  
principal (head of school, or a main element)  
principle (a rule or belief governing one's behaviour)  
privilege  
proactive  
professional  
professor  
programme (but computer program)  
pronunciation  
psychiatry  
psychology  
pursue

**Q**

quantify  
quarrel  
quarter-final  
quartermaster  
questionnaire  
queue

**R**

racecourse  
radioactive  
ratepayer  
receipt  
receive  
recession

recommend  
referred  
renaissance  
repetition  
restaurateur  
rhyme  
rhythm  
ridiculous

### **S**

school-leaver  
seize  
seizure  
semi-final  
separate, separation  
shepherd  
siege  
significant  
similar  
simile  
skilful  
specialise  
sphere  
stationary (not moving)  
stationery (writing material)  
subpoena  
subsection  
succeed  
succession  
summon (call)  
summons (order to appear in court). Past tense: summonsed  
superintendent  
superior  
supposedly

### **T**

tariff  
teamwork  
threshold  
toll-fee

toll plaza  
toll road  
truly  
tyranny

### U

unanimous  
undoubtedly  
usually

### V

victoriously  
visitation  
vociferous  
voluminous

### W

woman abuse (not women)  
weird  
withhold  
workforce  
workplace

### Y

yearbook  
youthful

## 6.2 Redundancies

### Avoid

12 midnight  
12 noon  
a great deal of  
a number of  
a person who is honest  
a total of 14 birds  
absolutely spectacular or phenomenal  
afforded the opportunity  
approximately  
as a result of

### Rather use

*midnight*  
*noon*  
*many, most or much*  
*a few, some, many, or several*  
*an honest person*  
*14 birds*  
*spectacular or phenomenal*  
*given the opportunity*  
*about*  
*because, because of or since*

as to whether  
at this point in time  
attempt  
biography of her life  
by means of  
circle around  
close proximity  
completely unanimous  
consensus of opinion  
cooperate together  
each and every  
enclosed herewith  
end result  
endeavour  
enhance  
exactly the same  
final completion  
for the purpose of  
frank and honest exchange  
free gift  
he/she is a person who...  
implement  
important or basic essentials  
in many cases  
in order to  
in spite of the fact that  
in the context of  
in the event that  
in the first place  
inception  
incorrect  
infrastructure  
job functions  
month of June  
new innovations  
one and the same  
participate  
particular interest  
period of four days  
personal opinion

*whether*  
*at this point or now*  
*try*  
*biography*  
*by*  
*circle*  
*proximity*  
*unanimous*  
*consensus*  
*cooperate*  
*each*  
*enclosed*  
*result*  
*try*  
*improve*  
*the same*  
*completion*  
*for, to or of*  
*frank exchange or honest exchange*  
*gift*  
*he or she*  
*carry out*  
*essentials*  
*often*  
*to*  
*although or despite*  
*for or about*  
*if*  
*first or firstly*  
*start or beginning*  
*wrong*  
*be specific in the context*  
*job or functions*  
*June*  
*innovations*  
*the same*  
*take part in*  
*interest*  
*four days*  
*opinion*

personally I think/ feel  
pertaining to  
purchase  
puzzling in nature  
reasons why  
reconstruct  
refer back  
relating to  
repeat again  
return again  
revert back  
shorter/longer in length  
small/large in size  
square/round/rectangular in shape  
summarise briefly  
surrounded on all sides  
surrounding circumstances  
systematic  
the fact that  
the future to come  
there is no doubt about that  
to a larger degree  
usual/habitual custom  
utilise  
we are in receipt of

*I think or I feel*  
*relating to or belonging to*  
*buy*  
*puzzling*  
*reasons*  
*rebuild*  
*refer*  
*about*  
*repeat*  
*return*  
*revert*  
*shorter or longer*  
*small or large*  
*square, round or rectangular*  
*summarise*  
*surrounded*  
*circumstances*  
*organised*  
*that*  
*the future*  
*no doubt*  
*largely*  
*custom*  
*use*  
*we have received*

### 6.3 Common abbreviations

#### A

<b>AA</b>	affirmative action
<b>AA</b>	Alcoholics Anonymous
<b>AA</b>	Automobile Association
<b>AAA</b>	Association of Advertising Agencies
<b>ABC</b>	Agricultural Business Chamber
<b>ABC</b>	Audit Bureau of Circulation
<b>Abet</b>	Adult Basic Education and Training
<b>ACDP</b>	African Christian Democratic Party
<b>ACP</b>	African, Caribbean and Pacific states
<b>ACS</b>	Agricultural Credit Scheme
<b>Acsa</b>	Airports Company South Africa

<b>AEC</b>	African Economic Community
<b>AFP</b>	<i>Agence France-Presse</i>
<b>AFU</b>	Asset Forfeiture Unit
<b>A-G</b>	attorney-general
<b>A-G</b>	auditor-general
<b>AGOA</b>	African Growth and Opportunity Act
<b>AIDS</b>	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
<b>Alssa</b>	Association of Law Societies of South Africa
<b>AMPS</b>	All Media Products Survey
<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>ANCWL</b>	ANC Women's League
<b>ANCYL</b>	ANC Youth League
<b>AO</b>	accounting officer
<b>AP</b>	Associated Press
<b>Apla</b>	Azanian People's Liberation Army
<b>APRM</b>	African Peer Review Mechanism
<b>ARC</b>	Agricultural Research Council
<b>Armscor</b>	Armaments Corporation of South Africa
<b>ART</b>	antiretroviral treatment
<b>ASA</b>	Advertising Standards Authority
<b>ASD</b>	assistant director
<b>Asean</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>AsgiSA</b>	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
<b>ATKV</b>	Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging
<b>ATNS</b>	Air Traffic and Navigational Services Company
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>Azapo</b>	Azanian People's Organisation
<b>B</b>	
<b>BA</b>	Bachelor of Arts
<b>BA</b>	British Airways
<b>BAC</b>	Business Against Crime
<b>BAS</b>	Basic Accounting System
<b>Basa</b>	Business and Arts South Africa
<b>BBBEE</b>	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
<b>BBC</b>	Black Business Council
<b>BBC</b>	British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>BBi</b>	Black Business Initiative
<b>Bcawu</b>	Building Construction and Allied Workers' Union
<b>BCCSA</b>	Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa

<b>BCEA</b>	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
<b>BCM</b>	Black Consciousness Movement
<b>BEE</b>	Black Economic Empowerment
<b>BEEC</b>	Black Economic Empowerment Commission
<b>Bifsa</b>	Building Industries Federation of South Africa
<b>BLNS</b>	Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland
<b>BMF</b>	Black Management Forum
<b>BNC</b>	binational commission
<b>Brig.</b>	Brigadier
<b>C</b>	
<b>CAADP</b>	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
<b>CAF</b>	Confederation of African Football
<b>Capt.</b>	Captain
<b>Caricom</b>	Caribbean Community
<b>CBO</b>	community-based organisation
<b>CBRTA</b>	Cross-Boarder Road Transport Agency
<b>CC</b>	Competition Commission
<b>CC</b>	Constitutional Court
<b>CCF</b>	credit-card format
<b>CCMA</b>	Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
<b>CCTV</b>	close-circuit television
<b>CDA</b>	Central Drug Authority
<b>CDW</b>	community development worker
<b>Cedaw</b>	(United Nations) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CEF</b>	Central Energy Fund
<b>CEM</b>	Council of Education Ministers
<b>CEO</b>	chief executive officer
<b>CFO</b>	chief financial officer
<b>CGE</b>	Commission on Gender Equality
<b>CGIC</b>	Credit Guarantee Insurance Corporation
<b>CHE</b>	Council of Higher Education
<b>CHOGM</b>	Commonwealth Heads of State and Government Meeting
<b>CIO</b>	chief information officer
<b>CISA</b>	Consumer Institute of South Africa
<b>Cites</b>	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
<b>CJS</b>	criminal justice system
<b>Clara</b>	Communal Land Rights Act
<b>Cllr</b>	councillor

<b>Cmr</b>	commissioner
<b>CNN</b>	Cable News Network
<b>Col</b>	Colonel
<b>Contralesa</b>	Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa
<b>COO</b>	chief operating officer
<b>Cope</b>	Congress of the People
<b>Cosab</b>	Council of South African Banks
<b>Cosafa</b>	Council of Southern African Football Associations
<b>Cosas</b>	Congress of South African Students
<b>Cosatu</b>	Congress of South African Trade Unions
<b>CPA</b>	Cotonou Partnership Agreement
<b>CPF</b>	community policing forum
<b>CPI</b>	consumer price index
<b>CPO</b>	citizen's post office
<b>CPU</b>	Child Protection Unit
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CRC</b>	Criminal Record Centre
<b>CRLR</b>	Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights
<b>CSA</b>	Communication Service Agency (GCIS)
<b>CSBP</b>	Centre for Small Business Promotion
<b>CSG</b>	Child Support Grant
<b>CSIR</b>	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
<b>CWC</b>	Chemical Weapons Convention

## **D**

<b>DA</b>	Democratic Alliance
<b>DBSA</b>	Development Bank of Southern Africa
<b>DC</b>	diplomatic corps
<b>DCEO</b>	deputy chief executive officer
<b>DCF</b>	District Communicators' Forum
<b>DD</b>	deputy director
<b>DG</b>	director-general
<b>Dir</b>	director/directorate
<b>Dissa</b>	Disability Sport South Africa
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo

## **E**

<b>EAP</b>	Employee Assistance Programme
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>ECD</b>	Early Childhood Development

<b>Ecosocc</b>	(United Nations) Economic, Social and Cultural Council
<b>Ecowas</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>Efta</b>	European Free Trade Association
<b>EIA</b>	environmental impact assessment
<b>EIP</b>	environmental implementation plan
<b>eNaTIS</b>	Electronic National Traffic Information System
<b>ENE</b>	Estimates of National Expenditure
<b>EPWP</b>	Expanded Public Works Programme
<b>ESI</b>	electricity supply industry
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EWT</b>	Endangered Wildlife Trust

## **F**

<b>F</b>	Fahrenheit
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation
<b>FAS</b>	Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
<b>Fawu</b>	Food and Allied Workers Union
<b>FBI</b>	Federal Bureau of Investigation
<b>FBO</b>	faith-based organisation
<b>FCA</b>	Foreign Correspondents' Association
<b>FCI</b>	Federated Chamber of Industries
<b>FDI</b>	foreign direct investment
<b>Fedhasa</b>	Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa
<b>Fedsal</b>	Federation of South African Labour Unions
<b>Fedshaw</b>	Federation of South African Women
<b>Fedusa</b>	Federation of Unions of South Africa
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training
<b>FETC</b>	Further Education and Training Certificate
<b>FF+</b>	Freedom Front Plus
<b>FFC</b>	Financial and Fiscal Commission
<b>FICA</b>	Financial Intelligence Centre Act
<b>FIFA</b>	<i>Fédération Internationale de Football Association</i>
<b>FIG</b>	foreign investment grant
<b>FRU</b>	Film Resource Unit
<b>FSB</b>	Financial Services Board
<b>FSI</b>	Foreign Service Institute
<b>FTA</b>	free trade agreement
<b>FTFA</b>	Food and Trees for Africa
<b>FXI</b>	Freedom of Expression Institute

**G**

<b>GAP</b>	Gender Advocacy Programme
<b>GATT</b>	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
<b>GCF</b>	Government Communicators' Forum
<b>GCIS</b>	Government Communication and Information System
<b>GCP</b>	Government Communication Programme
<b>GCS</b>	Government Communication Strategy
<b>GDP</b>	gross domestic product
<b>GDS</b>	Growth and Development Summit
<b>Gems</b>	Government Employees Medical Scheme
<b>GEPF</b>	Government Employees Pension Fund
<b>GET</b>	General Education and Training
<b>GG</b>	Government Garage
<b>GIC</b>	Government Information Centre
<b>G&amp;ML</b>	Government and Media Liaison
<b>GLTP</b>	Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park
<b>GMT</b>	Greenwich Mean Time
<b>GNP</b>	gross national product
<b>G77</b>	Group of 77
<b>G8</b>	Group of Eight

**H**

<b>HDI</b>	historically disadvantaged individual
<b>HDP</b>	historically disadvantaged person
<b>HITB</b>	Hospitality Industries Training Board
<b>HIV</b>	human immunodeficiency virus
<b>HoC</b>	head of communication
<b>HoD</b>	head of department
<b>Hospersa</b>	Health and Other Service Personnel Trade Union of South Africa
<b>HPCSA</b>	Health Professions Council of South Africa
<b>HR</b>	human resources
<b>HRD</b>	human-resource development
<b>HRIS</b>	Human-Resource Information System
<b>HRM</b>	human-resource management
<b>HSGIC</b>	Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee
<b>HSRC</b>	Human Sciences Research Council

**I**

<b>IAAF</b>	International Association of Athletics Federations
<b>IAJ</b>	Institute for the Advancement of Journalism

<b>IBO</b>	International Boxing Organisation
<b>IBSA</b>	India-Brazil-South Africa
<b>Icasa</b>	Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
<b>ICC</b>	International Chamber of Commerce
<b>ICC</b>	International Cricket Council
<b>ICC</b>	International Criminal Court
<b>ICD</b>	Independent Complaints Directorate
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>ICT</b>	information and communications technology
<b>ID</b>	identity document
<b>ID</b>	Independent Democrats
<b>Idasa</b>	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
<b>IDB</b>	illicit diamond buying
<b>IDC</b>	Industrial Development Corporation
<b>IDP</b>	Integrated Development Plan
<b>IDT</b>	Independent Development Trust
<b>IDZs</b>	industrial development zones
<b>IEC</b>	Independent Electoral Commission
<b>IFP</b>	Inkatha Freedom Party
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>IMC</b>	International Marketing Council
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IMR</b>	Institute for Medical Research
<b>Interpol</b>	International Criminal Police Organisation
<b>IOC</b>	International Olympic Committee
<b>IOL</b>	Independent Online
<b>IOR-ARC</b>	Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation
<b>IPO</b>	initial public offering
<b>ISBN</b>	International Standard Book Number
<b>ISO</b>	International Organisation for Standardisation
<b>ISP</b>	Internet service-provider
<b>ISRDP</b>	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme
<b>ISSN</b>	International Standard Serial Number
<b>IT</b>	information technology
<b>ITU</b>	International Telecommunication Union

## **J**

<b>JBC</b>	Joint Bilateral Commission
<b>JCC</b>	Joint Commission of Cooperation
<b>JCPS</b>	Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster

<b>Jipsa</b>	Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition
<b>JPC</b>	Joint Permanent Commission
<b>JPCC</b>	Joint Permanent Commission for Cooperation
<b>JSC</b>	Judicial Service Commission
<b>K</b>	
<b>Kat</b>	Karoo Array Telescope
<b>KNP</b>	Kruger National Park
<b>kWh</b>	Kilowatt hours
<b>KZN</b>	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>L</b>	
<b>LED</b>	Local Economic Development
<b>LCC</b>	Land Claims Court
<b>LHR</b>	Lawyers for Human Rights
<b>LHWP</b>	Lesotho Highlands Water Project
<b>Liasa</b>	Library and Information Association of South Africa
<b>LLIM</b>	Local Liaison and Information Management
<b>LPG</b>	liquid petroleum gas
<b>LRA</b>	Labour Relations Act
<b>LRAD</b>	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
<b>LRC</b>	Legal Resources Centre
<b>LSM</b>	Living Standards Measure
<b>M</b>	
<b>MBA</b>	Master of Business Administration
<b>MCC</b>	Medicines Control Council
<b>MDB</b>	Municipal Demarcation Board
<b>MD</b>	managing director
<b>MDDA</b>	Media Development and Diversity Agency
<b>MDGs</b>	millennium development goals
<b>M&amp;E</b>	monitoring and evaluation
<b>MEC</b>	Member of the Executive Council
<b>Mercosur</b>	South American Common Market
<b>MFMA</b>	Municipal Finance Management Act
<b>MFRC</b>	Micro-Finance Regulatory Council
<b>MHSI</b>	Mine Health and Safety Inspectorate
<b>MIDP</b>	Motor Industry Development Programme
<b>MinMec</b>	Minister and Member of the Executive Council
<b>Misa</b>	Media Institute of Southern Africa

<b>MISS</b>	Minimum Information Security Standards
<b>MK</b>	Umkhonto weSizwe
<b>MLC</b>	metropolitan local council
<b>MLO</b>	ministerial liaison officer
<b>MoU</b>	memorandum of understanding
<b>MP</b>	Member of Parliament
<b>MP</b>	Military Police
<b>MPC</b>	Monetary Policy Committee
<b>MPRDA</b>	Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act
<b>MRC</b>	Medical Research Council
<b>MRM</b>	Moral Regeneration Movement
<b>MSc</b>	Master of Science
<b>MTEF</b>	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
<b>N</b>	
<b>NA</b>	National Assembly
<b>NACF</b>	National Anti-Corruption Forum
<b>Nactu</b>	National Council of Trade Unions
<b>Nafcoc</b>	National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry
<b>Nafu</b>	National African Farmers' Union
<b>Nam</b>	Non-Aligned Movement
<b>NAMC</b>	National Agricultural Marketing Council
<b>Nampo</b>	National Maize Producers' Organisation
<b>Napwa</b>	National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS
<b>Nasasa</b>	National Stokvels Association of South Africa
<b>Nasrec</b>	National Sports, Recreation and Exhibition Centre
<b>Nato</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
<b>NBFET</b>	National Board for Further Education and Training
<b>NBI</b>	National Botanical Institute
<b>NCACC</b>	National Conventional Arms Control Committee
<b>NCCS</b>	National Crime Combating Strategy
<b>NCOP</b>	National Council of Provinces
<b>NCPS</b>	National Crime Prevention Strategy
<b>NCRF</b>	National Community Radio Forum
<b>NDPP</b>	National Directorate of Public Prosecutions
<b>NDA</b>	National Development Agency
<b>NEC</b>	national executive committee
<b>Nedlac</b>	National Economic Development and Labour Council
<b>NEF</b>	National Empowerment Fund
<b>Nehawu</b>	National, Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union

<b>Nemisa</b>	National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa
<b>Nepad</b>	New Partnership for Africa's Development
<b>Nersa</b>	National Energy Regulator of South Africa
<b>NFVF</b>	National Film and Video Foundation
<b>NGO</b>	non-governmental organisation
<b>NHBRC</b>	National Home-Builders' Registration Council
<b>NHC</b>	National Heritage Council
<b>NHF</b>	National Heritage Foundation
<b>NHFC</b>	National Housing Finance Corporation
<b>NIA</b>	National Intelligence Agency
<b>Nicoc</b>	National Intelligence Coordinating Committee
<b>Nicro</b>	National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders
<b>NIPILAR</b>	National Institute for Public Interest Law and Research
<b>NLS</b>	National Language Service
<b>NLSA</b>	National Library of South Africa
<b>NMT</b>	non-motorised transport
<b>Nocsa</b>	National Olympic Committee of South Africa
<b>Nosa</b>	National Occupational Safety Association
<b>NPA</b>	National Ports Authority
<b>NPA</b>	National Prosecuting Authority
<b>NPI</b>	National Productivity Institute
<b>NPO</b>	non-profit organisation
<b>NPS</b>	National Prosecuting Services
<b>NPU</b>	Newspaper Press Union
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualifications Framework
<b>NRF</b>	National Research Foundation
<b>NRSC</b>	National Road Safety Council
<b>NSA</b>	National Skills Authority
<b>NSFAS</b>	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
<b>NSNP</b>	National School Nutrition Programme
<b>NSRI</b>	National Sea Rescue Institute
<b>NUF</b>	National Union of Farmworkers
<b>NUM</b>	National Union of Mineworkers
<b>Numsa</b>	National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa
<b>Nurcha</b>	National Urban Reconstruction and Housing Agency
<b>NYDA</b>	National Youth Youth Development Agency
<b>NZG</b>	National Zoological Gardens

**O**

<b>OAU</b>	Organisation of African Unity
------------	-------------------------------

<b>ODA</b>	overseas development assistance
<b>OHS</b>	Occupational Health and Safety
<b>Opec</b>	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
<b>OPSC</b>	Office of the Public Service Commission
<b>OSD</b>	Occupation Specific Dispensation
<b>OSEO</b>	Office for Serious Economic Offences
<b>P</b>	
<b>PAC</b>	Pan Africanist Congress
<b>Palama</b>	Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy
<b>PanSALB</b>	Pan South African Language Board
<b>PAP</b>	Pan-African Parliament
<b>PAYE</b>	Pay As You Earn (income tax)
<b>PC</b>	Project Consolidate
<b>PCC</b>	Presidential Coordinating Council
<b>PCF</b>	Provincial Communication Forum
<b>PDI</b>	previously disadvantaged individual
<b>PEC</b>	Provincial Executive Committee
<b>PFMA</b>	Public Finance Management Act
<b>PGA</b>	Parliamentary Gallery Association
<b>PGDP</b>	Provincial Growth and Development Plan
<b>PGDS</b>	Provincial Growth and Development Strategy
<b>PGM</b>	platinum-group metal
<b>PHC</b>	primary healthcare
<b>PHP</b>	People's Housing Process
<b>PhD</b>	Doctor of Philosophy
<b>Pillir</b>	Policy on Incapacity Leave and Ill-health Retirement
<b>PLL</b>	Provincial and Local Liaison
<b>PMS</b>	Performance Management System
<b>PMTCT</b>	Preventing Mother-To-Child Transmission
<b>Popcru</b>	Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union
<b>Potwa</b>	Post and Telecommunications Workers' Association
<b>Powa</b>	People Opposed to Women Abuse
<b>PPC</b>	Presidential Press Corps
<b>PPP</b>	public-private partnership
<b>Prisa</b>	Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa
<b>Prof.</b>	Professor (note full stop)
<b>PSA</b>	Public Servants' Association
<b>PSA</b>	public service announcement
<b>PSC</b>	Peace and Security Council (AU)

<b>PSC</b>	Public Service Commission
<b>PTA</b>	parent-teachers' association
<b>R</b>	
<b>RAF</b>	Road Accident Fund
<b>REC</b>	regional economic community
<b>RDC</b>	regional district council
<b>RDP</b>	Reconstruction and Development Programme
<b>RRU</b>	Rapid Response Unit
<b>RTMC</b>	Road Traffic Management Corporation
<b>S</b>	
<b>SAA</b>	South African Airways
<b>SAAO</b>	South African Astronomical Observatory
<b>SAAU</b>	South African Agricultural Union
<b>SABC</b>	South African Broadcasting Corporation
<b>SABS</b>	South African Bureau of Standards
<b>SACAA</b>	South African Civil Aviation Authority
<b>SACC</b>	South African Council of Churches
<b>SACE</b>	South African Council for Educators
<b>Sacob</b>	South African Chamber of Business
<b>SACP</b>	South African Communist Party
<b>Sactwu</b>	Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union
<b>Sacu</b>	Southern African Customs Union
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>Sadtu</b>	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
<b>Safa</b>	South African Football Association
<b>Safcol</b>	South African Forestry Company Limited
<b>Sagda</b>	South African Graduates Development Association
<b>SAGNC</b>	South African Geographical Names Council
<b>SAHRC</b>	South African Human Rights Commission
<b>Salga</b>	South African Local Government Association
<b>SALRC</b>	South African Law Reform Commission
<b>Salt</b>	Southern African Large Telescope
<b>Sama</b>	South African Medical Association
<b>Samsa</b>	South African Maritime Safety Authority
<b>SANAC</b>	South African National AIDS Council
<b>Sanap</b>	South African National Antarctic Programme
<b>SANC</b>	South African Nursing Council
<b>Sanco</b>	South African National Civic Organisation

<b>SANDF</b>	South African National Defence Force
<b>Sanef</b>	South African National Editors' Forum
<b>SANParks</b>	South African National Parks
<b>Sanral</b>	South African National Roads Agency Limited
<b>Sanrec</b>	South African National Recreation Council
<b>Santaco</b>	South African National Taxi Council
<b>Sapa</b>	South African Press Association
<b>Sapohr</b>	South African Prisoners' Organisation for Human Rights
<b>Sapp</b>	Southern African Power Pool
<b>SAPS</b>	South African Police Service
<b>Sapu</b>	South African Police Union
<b>Saqa</b>	South African Qualifications Authority
<b>SARB</b>	South African Reserve Bank
<b>SARCC</b>	South African Rail Commuter Corporation
<b>Sarfu</b>	South African Rugby Football Union
<b>SARPCCO</b>	Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation
<b>Sars</b>	South African Revenue Service
<b>SAS</b>	South African Ship
<b>Sasar</b>	South African Search and Rescue Organisation
<b>Sasco</b>	South African Students Congress
<b>Saspu</b>	South African Students Press Union
<b>SASS</b>	South African Secret Service
<b>Sassa</b>	South African Social Security Agency
<b>Sati</b>	South African Translators' Institute
<b>Sawen</b>	South African Woman Entrepreneurs' Network
<b>SAWS</b>	South African Weather Service
<b>SDI</b>	spatial development initiative
<b>Seda</b>	Small Enterprise Development Agency
<b>SET</b>	science, engineering and technology
<b>Seta</b>	Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>SFF</b>	Strategic Fuel Fund
<b>SHI</b>	Social Health Insurance
<b>SIPP</b>	special integrated presidential project
<b>Sita</b>	State Information Technology Agency
<b>Site</b>	Standard Income Tax on Employees
<b>SIU</b>	Special Investigation Unit
<b>SMMEs</b>	small, medium and micro-enterprises
<b>SOEs</b>	state-owned enterprises
<b>SoNA</b>	State of the Nation Address
<b>SPCA</b>	Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

<b>SRSA</b>	Sport and Recreation South Africa
<b>S&amp;T</b>	science and technology
<b>STIs</b>	sexual transmitted infections
<b>T</b>	
<b>TB</b>	tuberculosis
<b>TDCA</b>	Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement
<b>Tefsa</b>	Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa
<b>TFCA</b>	transfrontier conservation area
<b>Thrip</b>	Technology and Human Resource for Industry Programme
<b>Ticad</b>	Tokyo International Conference on African Development
<b>Tisa</b>	Trade and Investment South Africa
<b>TKC</b>	Trans-Kalahari Corridor
<b>TRC</b>	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
<b>TRP</b>	Taxi Recapitalisation Programme
<b>Twib</b>	Technology for Women in Business
<b>U</b>	
<b>UCB</b>	United Cricket Board
<b>UCDP</b>	United Christian Democratic Party
<b>UDM</b>	United Democratic Movement
<b>UIF</b>	Unemployment Insurance Fund
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)
<b>Umalusi</b>	General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Council
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>Unctad</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>Unep</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>Unesco</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>Unga</b>	United Nations General Assembly
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees
<b>Unicef</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>Unido</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
<b>Unifem</b>	United Nations Development Fund for Women
<b>Unisa</b>	University of South Africa
<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>UNSG</b>	United Nations Secretary-General
<b>URL</b>	Uniform Resource Locator
<b>URP</b>	Urban Renewal Programme
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development

**V**  
**VAT** value-added tax  
**VCT** voluntary counselling and testing  
**VEP** Victim Empowerment Programme  
**VIP** very important person

**W**  
**Wan** wide area network  
**WEF** World Economic Forum  
**WHO** World Health Organisation  
**WHP** Women's Health Project  
**WID** Women in Development  
**Wims** Ward Information Management System  
**WRC** Water Research Commission  
**WTO** World Trade Organisation  
**WWF** World Wide Fund for Nature

**Compiled by Wordsmiths Publishing Services, [www.wordsmiths.co.za](http://www.wordsmiths.co.za) and the Directorate:  
Content Development, Government Communication and Information System**

Acknowledgements:  
Plain Language Communications (Pty) Ltd  
South African Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2002, Oxford University Press

The *Government Communicators' Handbook* is published by Government Communications (GCIS).

**HOW TO CONTACT US:**

Private Bag X745  
Pretoria  
0001

Cnr Prinsloo and Vermeulen streets  
Midtown Building  
Pretoria

Tel: 012 314 2911  
Fax: 012 325 3831  
Website: [www.gcis.gov.za](http://www.gcis.gov.za)

# GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS' HANDBOOK



government  
communications

Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA