

### 20. COMMUNICATION CLUSTER SYSTEM

#### 20.1 Communication clusters

In order to meet the objectives of the government communication system, the communication clusters were convened and processes have been created to achieve coordination of activity and coherence of content within an overarching strategy. Through integrated planning in clusters, government is able to ensure coherence and speak in one voice within the government communication system.

A communication cluster is a collection of departments whose work is complementary and thus need to work and plan together. Although not exactly the same, these clusters mirror the FOSAD clusters and Cabinet committees. Each cluster has a chairperson from the department whose DG is the chairperson of the FOSAD cluster, for ease of coordination and information flow.

The purpose of the communication clusters is to coordinate communication on the work of the government and collectively profile programmes and projects implemented in line with the PoA. Clusters are also expected to play a role in ensuring coordinated media briefings on the progress of the implementation of the PoA. Communication clusters coordinate as well as identify platforms and opportunities for communicating government work and progress in implementing its mandate.

#### 20.2 Background to the cluster approach

The *White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service* (DPSA, 1995) noted that the first democratic government inherited a system with poor integration and coordination. In recognition of this, the 1996 Presidential Review Commission recommended a stronger Cabinet secretariat or Cabinet office (The Presidency, 1998).

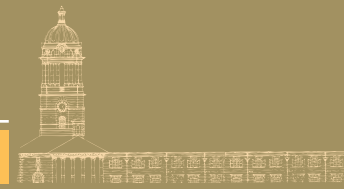
Based on the findings of the Presidential Review Commission and comparative studies of other countries by the then Deputy President's office, The Presidency was restructured in 1999 and a new system was put in place, including a new Cabinet cluster system and clusters of DGs. An integrated National Planning Framework was also put in place, including the Medium Term Strategic Framework, the Medium Term Expenditure Framework, and the Guide to the Outcomes Approach.

#### 20.3 The main purpose of the cluster system

The main purpose of the cluster system can be encapsulated as follows:

- Enable an Integrated and coordinated approach to policy formulation and coordination.
- Combat a silo approach to governance.
- Build a collegial approach and shared perspective on government priorities.
- Ensure that departments align their detailed activities with overall government priorities.





- Enable clusters to drive the implementation of the government's PoA as mandated by the Cabinet Makgotla.
- Identify disjuncture in policy – arising out of implementation – and review such policies.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the PoA.

### **20.4 Communication clusters coordinated by the GCIS**

Information flows from Cabinet and DGs clusters to the communication clusters coordinated by the GCIS. Communication clusters comprise the HoC at the level of Chief Director, responsible for national, line-function departments. The objectives of these meetings are to coordinate and plan for communication, cluster projects and programmes, to assess and plan for issues arising from Cabinet and DGs clusters, to assess the implementation of the cluster communication strategies and to share information. Communication cluster content is informed by decisions of the monthly DGs clusters comprising the same departments at DGs level.

Some of the advantages in using communication clusters include:

1. A platform for integrated communication and planning.
2. A platform where communicators can understand more about other departments so as to can have integrated messages.
3. Tools for service delivery and communication.
4. Coordination and planning for communication around cluster projects and programmes.
5. To assess and plan for issues arising from Cabinet and the DGs clusters.
6. To plan progress and assess the implementation of departmental and cluster communication strategies, and to share information and experiences.

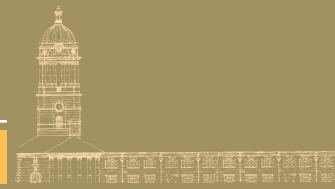
### **20.5 Role of cluster supervisors**

The fulfilment of the cluster supervisor's role is critical to ensure that in all of the government communication planning and execution, the GCIS remains within the strategic ambit of the work and direction of the clusters. Cluster supervisors' attendance at the respective DGs clusters ensure that government communication is aligned and responsive to the immediate needs to the cluster.

The supervisor should:

1. Ensure a clear picture – of the cluster and the different roles and responsibilities of the cluster team members are established. This includes cluster coordinators and officials participating in cluster activities from Media Liaison, National Liaison, Policy and Media Analysis and the PMO. The cluster supervisor must be able to clearly articulate the vision of respective clusters, including key priority programmes as well a communication implications and actions emanating from the cluster's PoA.
2. Must brief political principals/ministers prior to cluster briefings as well as lead in terms of delivering a final briefing note.





3. Must attend DGs cluster meetings. In the exception that a supervisor is unavailable protocols and procedures specific to each cluster must be adhered to for a representative to be sent. DGs cluster attendance is limited to Chief Director-level for the GCIS.
4. Attendance of strategic forums i.e must attend delivery forums to provide communication inputs and advise and identify communications opportunities and gaps; and other sector-specific forums which could include the Human Sciences Research Council; Markinor; UNAIDS; South African National AIDS Council, etc.
5. Provide strategic support, guidance and advice to the cluster team to ensure that communication outputs are within the scope and focus of each cluster.
6. Authorise the final communication content (inclusive of strategies and key messages) prior to being sent to principals outside of the GCIS for approval.
7. Authorise cluster progress/development reports for the Executive Committee (Exco) and Management Committee (Manco).
8. Give overall strategic advice, guidance and leadership to the GCIS management structures as well as to project teams on activities that relate to or impact on a particular cluster.
9. Establish a strong network with key cluster and department role players, including HoCs, cluster secretariats and chief of staff.
10. Contribution of cluster-specific work and content toward Makgotla/Cabinet submissions.
11. Present a communication report for the DGs cluster, which includes a report back on implementation from the communication cluster and reflects on the environment. The supervisor advises the DGs on communication areas that should be prioritised or any strategic communication issue that requires DGs intervention or decisions.
12. When required, present the National Communication Framework to departmental ExcOs or any other communication issues requiring assistance.
13. Intervene on blockages in departments regarding structural challenges, budgets or communication plans on key cluster projects.
14. Develop strategic cluster document based on requests from the CEO's office.

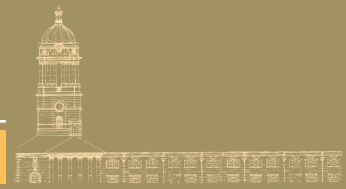
### **20.6 Role of the cluster coordinator**

The role of the cluster coordinator is two-fold. The coordinator has to coordinate all cluster-related meetings and has to be aware of all content issues in the cluster.

### **20.7 Convene cluster meetings in consultation with the supervisors and chairpersons**

- Ensure that the cluster meet as regularly as possible as aligned to the DGs cluster meetings.
- Ensure that the agenda of the cluster meeting reflects the overall cluster and communication objectives and is aligned to the feedback from the DGs cluster meetings.





### **Compile DGs cluster reports**

- Since the DGs approve the cluster strategy, it is advisable to draw a monthly report for them on implementation.
- Include the environmental scanning in the report.
- Plan on key interdepartmental programmes.
- Advise DGs on communications issues, including the coverage on key programmes.

### **Strategising**

- Cluster strategy and programme
- Drafting the cluster strategy aligned to the National Communication Framework and Outcomes.
- Coordinate inputs from cluster members to finalise the draft strategy.
- Facilitate presentation and approval on the strategy by the DGs cluster.

### **Departmental strategies and programmes**

- Give advice on strategies to departments and help where the need arises to finalise the strategies.
- Assess alignment of strategies and provide feedback.

### **Strategies on key cluster campaigns**

- Drafting project specific communication strategies when required.

### **Monitoring implementation**

- Monitor the implementation of cluster communication programmes.
- Coordinate reports from departments on the implementation of cluster communication programmes.
- Facilitate departmental responses on issues in the communication environment.

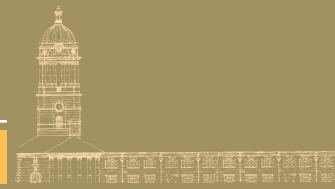
### **Content development**

- Produce key messages, facts sheets, communication paragraphs and Q&As on all cluster-related issues.
- Draft cluster media briefing notes and facilitate submission of inputs from all member departments and final approval from lead departments.
- Develop articles for the Monthly Electronic Cluster Bulletin to share cluster information with other cluster members.

### **Stakeholder liaison and support**

- External (cluster members)
- Maintain regular contact with departments to understand the work they do in line with the implementation of the PoA and cluster strategy.





- On continuous basis be accessible to provide any form of guidance to MLOs and HoCs in the implementation of the government programme and their work within the structures of government.

### **Induct new communicators with regard to the cluster system.**

- Internal GCIS cluster members.

### **Cluster secretariat**

The cluster secretariat is the key stakeholder.

The Cabinet Secretariat and the FOSAD Secretariat are responsible for compiling the annual Cabinet and FOSAD programmes respectively. Once this has been issued, the DGs Cluster Secretariat should compile the schedule of meetings for the cluster for the year.

### **Developing the outcomes PoA for the cluster**

As part of the planning cycle of government, clusters are expected to evaluate their allocated outcomes-based PoA on an annual basis to determine the activities that will be completed by the end of the year. Guidance on this process is managed by The Presidency. The responsibility of the DGs Cluster Secretariat will be to facilitate the compilation of the Cluster's PoA through the committees. Part of this process includes the identification of the relevant project managers (coordinators) for each of the activities in each leading department.

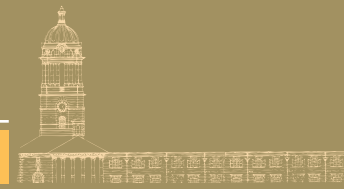
### **Cluster reporting to the Cabinet Committee on the implementation of the PoA**

The Presidency (Cabinet Secretariat and Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation [P&ME] Unit) will promulgate an Implementation Terms of Reference that will illustrate the relevant processes and time frames for reporting. The DGs Secretariat is responsible for facilitating the relevant inputs from the respective coordinating leading departments and to compile the final narrative report to be submitted to The Presidency's P&ME unit and the Cabinet Committee under cover of a Cabinet Memorandum.

### **Cabinet Makgotla:**

The DGs Cluster Secretariat, under the guidance of the chairperson (lead chairperson), will be responsible for managing the cluster's preparations for the annual Cabinet Makgotla (January and July). This will include strategic guidance on matters to be taken to the Cabinet Lekgotla, facilitating the relevant inputs and compiling and distributing the final cluster documents to be presented to the Cabinet Lekgotla. It also includes the preparation of the Minister's presentation (PowerPoint and speaking notes). The Secretariat liaises closely with the Cabinet Secretariat with respect to the relevant time frames and logistic requirements for the cluster's presentation to the Cabinet Lekgotla.





Following the Lekgotla, the secretariat ensures that the relevant decisions of the Cabinet Lekgotla are conveyed to the cluster; implemented and, where appropriate, included in the work programme of the cluster. Normally, preparatory meetings are held prior to the Cabinet Lekgotla between the relevant ministers and DGs of the cluster. In cooperation with the chairperson and deputy chairperson of the Ministerial Cluster, the secretariat manages the relevant logistic and substance support for the meeting.

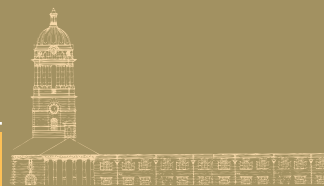
### **Functioning of the communication clusters:**

The work of the clusters follows and contributes to the government communication cycle.

1. January: the meeting of Cabinet Lekgotla to discuss government policies and priorities.
2. February: the Opening of Parliament, which is marked by the SoNA. The President officially announces the government policies and priorities to the public and it becomes a public commitment.
3. March: The GCIS presents the Government Overall Communication Strategy to the GCF meeting and the finalisation of departmental communication strategies. This is the first step of implementing government policies into projects/programmes.
4. March until November: Communication clusters are expected to develop cluster communication strategies/programmes in line with the themes emanating from the Overall Government Communication Strategy and DGs priorities and also monitor the implementation of both departmental and cluster communication strategies.
5. October and November: Departments are expected to submit the progress reports to The Presidency in preparation for the next communication cycle. HoCs are expected to actively participate in the compilation of these progress reports having been involved with implementation. In this way they will be able to give a full report on what has been achieved and not achieved.
6. December: The GCIS would draw the programme of the communication clusters, Pre-Cabinet, GCF and MLO Forum for the whole year and these programmes are normally determined by the DGs and Cabinet programmes in preparation for the coming year.
  - The optimal functioning of the cluster can only be achieved through commitment and active participation in these structures by HoCs. The chairpersons (departmental lead) and supervisors (GCIS) of the clusters have to attend the DGs cluster meetings at all times so that they can come with the programme of issues to be communicated as identified and prioritised by the Cabinet Lekgotla and FOSAD.
  - It is the responsibility of the HoC to ensure that the programmes of his/her department are known and also addressed by the cluster; this will assist in the realisation of integrated planning and communications.
  - Attendance of cluster meetings is restricted to HoCs.



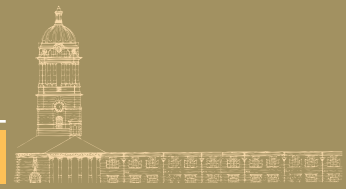
## CHAPTER 18



### OUTLINE OF COMMUNICATION CLUSTERS (AS OF MAY 2011)

CLUSTER	DEPARTMENTS
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communications</li> <li>2. Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA)</li> <li>3. Economic Development</li> <li>4. Energy</li> <li>5. Finance</li> <li>6. Human Settlements</li> <li>7. Public Enterprises</li> <li>8. Public Works</li> <li>9. The Presidency: National Planning Commission</li> <li>10. Transport</li> <li>11. Water and Environmental Affairs</li> </ol>
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arts and Culture</li> <li>2. Basic Education</li> <li>3. Health</li> <li>4. Higher Education and Training</li> <li>5. Labour</li> <li>6. Science and Technology</li> <li>7. Sport and Recreation</li> </ol>
SOCIAL PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. COGTA</li> <li>2. Environmental and Water Affairs</li> <li>3. Human Settlements</li> <li>4. Labour</li> <li>5. Public Works</li> <li>6. Rural Development and Land Affairs</li> <li>7. Social Development</li> <li>8. Transport</li> <li>9. Women, Children and People with Disabilities</li> </ol>

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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, TRADE AND SECURITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Defence and Military Veterans</li> <li>2. International Relations and Cooperation</li> <li>3. Finance</li> <li>4. State Security</li> <li>5. Tourism</li> <li>6. Trade and Industry</li> <li>7. Environmental Affairs</li> </ol>
GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. COGTA</li> <li>2. Home Affairs</li> <li>3. Justice and Constitutional Development</li> <li>4. Finance</li> <li>5. Public Service and Administration</li> <li>6. The Presidency: Performance Monitoring and Evaluation and Administration</li> </ol>
JUSTICE, CRIME PREVENTION AND SECURITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Correctional Services</li> <li>2. Defence</li> <li>3. Home Affairs</li> <li>4. Justice and Constitutional Development</li> <li>5. Police</li> <li>6. State Security</li> </ol>
ECONOMIC SECTORS AND EMPLOYMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agriculture</li> <li>2. Communications</li> <li>3. Economic Development</li> <li>4. Finance</li> <li>5. Higher Education and Training</li> <li>6. Labour</li> <li>7. Mineral Resources</li> <li>8. Public Enterprises</li> <li>9. Rural Development and Land Reform</li> <li>10. Science and Technology</li> <li>11. Tourism</li> <li>12. Trade and Industry</li> </ol>