COMMUNICATIONS

Department of Communications (DoC) and Digital Technologies (DCDT)

The DCDT is mandated to enable South Africa's digital transformation to achieve digital inclusion and economic growth by creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment.

This is done through the implementation of the 2016 *National Integrated Information and Communications Technology (ICT)Policy White Paper*, which provides for the participation of multiple stakeholders for inclusive digital transformation; interventions to reinforce competition and facilitate innovation across the value chain; measures to address issues raised by ICT and convergence; and the establishment of a new national postal policy framework.

It also provides for policies to address the digital divide and affordable access, supply-side issues and infrastructure rollout, and demand-side issues to facilitate inclusivity.

Chapter 4 of the National Development Plan recognises that access to high-speed ICT is a key enabler for inclusive economic growth. The work of the DCDT is integral to the realisation of this recognition, and gives it effect through the department's contribution to Priority 1 (economic transformation and job creation) of government's 2019-2024 Medium-Term Strategic Framework.

A priority for the department over the medium term is to develop and revise policies, strategies and legislation to align with the objectives of the 2016 *National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper*, taking into consideration developments necessitated by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). The department is expected to focus on rolling out the South Africa Connect Broadband Policy, implementing the Broadcasting Digital Migration Policy and submitting new Bills to Parliament.

Rolling out broadband through South Africa Connect

Over the medium term, the DCDT is expected to continue providing broadband connectivity to government buildings by implementing the digital development pillar of the South Africa Connect broadband policy. By 2022/23, a targeted 970 government buildings are expected to be connected in the pilot phase. The business case for the second phase, which aims to connect government buildings throughout the country, will be developed over the medium term.

Migrating towards digital broadcasting

The new model for the implementation of broadcasting digital migration over the medium term includes the provision of vouchers to indigent households for devices that will allow analogue televisions to receive digital signals, and compensation to the South African Post Office (SAPO) for the costs of administering the voucher and distribution systems.

Implementing the 2016 *National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper*

Some of the Bills required for the implementation of the 2016 *National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper* to be developed and submitted to Parliament over the medium term include the Digital Development Fund Bill; State IT Company Bill; State ICT Infrastructure Company Bill; Digital Transformation Bill, and Audio-visual Content Bill. This will allow for, among other things, the rationalisation of state-owned ICT companies for greater

efficiency, and ensure that communities and individuals have access to ICT services and skills for the digital economy.

Entities
Sentech
Sentech is responsible for providing broadcasting signal distribution services to licensed television and radio broadcasters. Over the medium term, the entity will focus on creating new revenue streams through acquisitions and the formation of strategic partnerships. It aims to build a wireless broadband business, and invest in technologies to enhance the performance of its connectivity services to existing and future clients.

South African Broadcasting Corporation
The SABC is mandated to provide South Africans with radio and television broadcasting services. It is also required to provide a wide range of programming that displays South African talent in educational and entertainment programmes; offer a diversity of views and a variety of news, information and analysis; and advance national and public interests.

Over the medium term, the corporation will focus on finalising and implementing its turnaround strategy, which aims to invest in new and compelling content to attract audiences, and thereby attract advertisers and increase revenue. The corporation generate its revenue through licence fees and advertising, and sport sponsorship, across television, radio and online platforms. The entity has experienced significant financial challenges over the past three financial years due to a decrease in viewership, listenership and revenue.

South African Post Office
The SAPO provides postal and related services to the public, and has an exclusive mandate to conduct postal services in the reserved sector for items such as letters, postcards and parcels less than one kilogram. Over the medium term, the SAPO is expected to focus on providing universal access to postal and related services, stabilising its financial position, optimising its personnel to ensure operational effectiveness, and distributing social grants on behalf of the South African Social Security Agency. The SAPO generates revenue by providing postal and courier services, and through income earned from interest and fees for financial transactions.

State Information Technology Agency
SITA is mandated to provide IT, information systems and related services to and on behalf of government departments and organs of state. The agency is required to maintain secure information systems and execute its functions according to approved policies and standards.

Over the medium term, the agency will focus on delivering and operationalising an integrated digital ecosystem for government by migrating government data to cloud services. This is expected to enable greater accessibility and the integration of data from different sources, thereby improving policy analysis and decision-making.

The implementation of the government digital transformation strategy will entail facilitating the acquisition of ICT skills and the modernisation of government infrastructure. The entity generates its revenue by providing ICT infrastructure and services to government departments and organs of state.

Other entities:
- **Broadband Infraco** was established in terms of the Broadband Infraco Act of 2007 to provide ICT infrastructure and broadband capacity in South Africa, and expand the availability and affordability of access to electronic communications.
- The **Film and Publication Board** was established in terms of the Films and Publications Act of 1996, as amended, to regulate the creation, production, possession and distribution of certain publications and films.
- The **Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA)** was established by the ICASA Act of 2000 to regulate the South African communications, broadcasting and postal services sectors.
- The **National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa** was established as a non-profit educational institute in terms of the Companies Act of 1973 to enhance the market readiness of students in various broadcasting disciplines, and has since been expanded to include the development of e-skills.
- The **Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa** was established in terms of section 80 of the Electronic Communications Act of 2005 to promote universal service and access to electronic communications services, electronic communications network services and broadcasting services.

Communication platforms

Radio

The SABC's national radio network of 18 radio stations reach over 28 million South Africans. The top five most listened to radio stations in the country are Ukhozi FM, Umhlobo Wenene FM, Lesedi FM, Thobela FM and Metro FM.

Commercial radio stations

Commercial radio stations in South Africa include:
- Algoa FM
- Classic FM
- Kaya FM
- YFM
- 94.7 Highveld Stereo
- 702 Talk Radio
- Metro FM
- 5FM
- Good Hope FM
- Jacaranda 94.2
- OFM
- East Coast Radio
- 567 Cape Talk
- Radio 2000
- Capricorn FM
- Power FM
- Radio KFM.

Community radio

In terms of Section 7 of the Electronic Communications Act of 2005, it is unlawful to provide or operate a broadcasting service without a licence. There are more than 165 licensed community stations in South Africa, which broadcast in a number of languages.

Television

SABC TV consists of three free-to air (FTA) channels namely, SABC1, SABC2 and SABC3 as well as two channels carried on a subscription digital satellite network, SABC Encore and the 24-hour news channel (Channel 404), SABCNews. SABC News offers breaking news and continuous news updates in 51 African countries.

SABC1, SABC2 and SABC3 attract on average 28 million South African viewers a month, as they deliver top quality local and international content. SABC Encore, a retro channel which showcases programming from the 1980s, is an integral part of the SABC's strategy moving into a multichannel environment.

Community TV

There are at least 12 community TV stations operational in different parts of South Africa, including Soweto TV; GauTV; 1KZN; Cape Town TV; Tshwane TV; Mpuma Kapa TV and Onse TV.

FTA TV

e.tv is South Africa's first private and largest English-medium channel. The channel also has a pan-African presence through e.tv Africa, which is distributed on the DStv Africa bouquet and by local affiliates in African countries. In 2019, ICASA awarded Kwesé Free TV a broadcasting and radio frequency spectrum licence.

Satellite broadcasting

eNews Channel Africa (eNCA) is South Africa's first and most watched independent 24-hour TV news channel on the DStv platform (Channel 403).

The 24-hour news service is broadcast live in the UK to over 10,5 million subscribers on the Sky digital satellite platform. eNCA provides live news bulletins to nearly three million South African viewers each night on e.tv (in English, isiZulu and Sesotho) and to more than 200 000 Afrikaans viewers on kykNET.

The SABC has a 24-hour news channel on DStv (Channel 404). Newzroom Afrika, the new 24-hour TV news station on DStv channel 405, which ANN7 in 2019.

Internet

Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) General Household Survey (GHS) of 2018 shows that about 64,7% of South African households had at least one member who had access to, or used the Internet either at home, work, place of study or Internet cafés.

Access to the Internet using all available means was highest in Gauteng (74,6%), Western Cape (72,4%) and Mpumalanga (70,2%), and lowest in Limpopo (46,2%) and Eastern Cape (55,3%).

Marginally over one-tenth (10,4%) of South African households had access to the Internet at home. Access to the Internet at home was highest among households in Western Cape (25,8%) and Gauteng (16,7%), and lowest in Limpopo (1,7%) and North West (3,0%).

Household access to the Internet at home was highest in Western Cape (25,8%) and Gauteng (16,7%) and lowest in Limpopo (1,7%). While 17,3% of households in metropolitan areas had access to the Internet at home, this was true for only 1,7% of rural households in general and less than one per cent of rural households in North West (0,8%) and Limpopo (0,6%).

Households were generally more likely to have access to the Internet at work than at home or at Internet cafés or at educational institutions. Households in Gauteng and Western Cape were most likely to access the Internet at work while those in Limpopo were least likely to do so.

Using mobile devices to access the Internet includes access on cellular telephones or using mobile access devices such as 3G cards. Mobile access to the Internet has made it much more accessible to households in rural areas.

Nationally, Internet access using mobile devices (60,1%) was much more common than access at home (10,4%), at work (16,2%) and elsewhere (10,1%). Although the use of mobile Internet access devices in rural areas (45,0%) still lags behind its use in metros (67,5%) and urban areas (63,7%), it is much more common in rural areas than any of the alternative methods.

Social media
About 40% of South Africa's population, some 22.89 million people out of an estimated population of over 57 million, are active social media users.

Telecommunications
South Africa has five major mobile operators, namely CellC, MTN, Vodacom, Telkom Mobile and Virgin Mobile. According to Stats SA's GHS of 2018, nationally, only 3,4% of households did not have access to either landlines or cellular phones.

Households without access to these communication media were most common in Northern Cape (10,3%) and Eastern Cape (7,6%). Only 0,1% of South African households used only landlines.

By comparison, 89,5% of South African households exclusively use cellular phones. The exclusive use of cellular phones was most common in Mpumalanga (96,5%), Limpopo (94,5%), North West (92,1%) and Gauteng (90,7%).

Households that had higher usage of both cellular phones and landlines were most common in the more prosperous provinces, namely Western Cape (18,4%) and Gauteng (7,8%).

The media
South Africa has a vibrant and independent media, with print, broadcast and online offerings.

Print
Newspapers
Most South African newspapers and magazines are organised into several major publishing houses. These include Media24 (part of Naspers), Independent Media, Caxton Publishers & Printers and Tiso Blackstar Group. Other important media players include M&G Media; the Natal Witness Printing & Publishing Company; Primedia Publishing; Highbury Media and Kagiso Media.

Magazines

According to figures released by the Audit Bureau of Circulations of South Africa, there has been a steady decline in magazine circulation in South Africa over the past months, with only a handful of commercial magazines achieving a steady increase in circulation.

Media organisations and role players

The **Publishers Support Services (PSS)** is an umbrella body incorporating print and digital media. It is a natural progression from the long-established Print Media South Africa and illustrates its commitment as an interactive organisation to keeping pace with the fast-changing media world of the 21st Century.

An evolving and vibrant association, its express purpose is to represent and promote all aspects concerning the industry and its members. PSS is a non-profit, voluntary association. Its membership includes more than 500 newspapers and magazine titles that cater for four different language groups

The **South African National Editors' Forum** promotes excellence in journalism through fighting for media freedom, writing policy submissions, research, education and training programmes.

The **Forum of Journalists for Transformation** addresses issues that directly affect its members. The **Press Council, the Press Ombud and the Appeals Panel** are an independent co-regulatory mechanism set up by the print and online media to provide impartial, expeditious and cost-effective adjudication to settle disputes between newspapers, magazines and online publications, on the one hand, and members of the public, on the other, over the editorial content of publications.

The **Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI)** was formed to defend freedom of expression, to oppose censorship, to promote access to information and knowledge, and to promote media diversity. The FXI is the leading organisation on issues of freedom of expression and access to information as enshrined in the Bill of Rights in Section 16 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996.

The **Forum of Community Journalists** is an independent, non-profit, non-racial and voluntary organisation striving to promote and express the interests of all journalists employed on a permanent or freelance basis at regional community newspapers, magazines and online community publications in South Africa.

The **Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa** serves as a voluntary watchdog to adjudicate complaints from the public about programmes flighted by members who subscribe to its code of conduct.

Media Monitoring Africa is a non-profit organisation that acts in a watchdog role to promote ethical and fair journalism that supports human rights.

The **National Community Radio Forum** lobbies for the airwaves in South Africa to be diversified, and for a dynamic broadcasting environment through the establishment of community radio stations.

Other press organisations operating in the country are the Foreign Correspondents' Association of Southern Africa; Printing Industries Federation of South Africa; South African Typographical Union; Specialist Press Association; South African Guild of Motoring Journalists; Professional Photographers of South Africa; Media Institute of Southern Africa; Publishers' Association of South Africa, and various press clubs in major centres.

News agencies

Local and international news agencies based in South Africa include:
- African News Agency
- Reuters
- Agence France-Presse
- Associated Press
- Deutsche Presse Agentur
- United Press International.

Media awards

Some of South Africa's media awards include the:
- Mondi Shanduka Newspaper Awards
- Vodacom Journalist of the Year Awards
- South African Breweries (SAB) Environmental Media and Environmentalist of the Year Awards
- SAB Sports Media Awards
- Sanlam Financial Journalist of the Year Award
- CNN MultiChoice African Journalist Awards
- Discovery Health Journalism Awards
- Nat Nakasa Award
- Local Media Excellence Awards
- Liberty Radio Awards
- Isu Elihle Awards
- Sikuvile Journalism Awards
- MDDA/Sanlam Local Media Awards
- New Generation (Social & Digital Media) Awards.

Marketing and advertising awards

South Africa has a vibrant and dynamic marketing and advertising industry. Some of the awards include:
- Loeries
- Assegai Awards
- Creative Circle Annual Awards
- Effie Awards
- FM AdFocus Awards
- Marketing Achievement Awards.