

Part 2

Introduction and corporate strategy



Introduction by the Chief Executive Officer

Some major strategic initiatives of GCIS matured during 2002/03. They began to impact on government and society in a way that set the scene for further transformation of government communication and broadening of access to the means of acquiring and imparting information and ideas. One of the core objectives of GCIS is democratising the communication environment.

This gained impetus as the roll-out of Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) passed the halfway mark of Phase I of the programme which will see 60 MPCCs operational by the end of 2004, bringing government information and services closer to millions of South Africans.

The establishment of the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) after the passing of the MDDAA Act in June and the appointment of the Board in December marked the fruition of a project in which government had engaged civil society from as early as 1996 through Comtask.

The *Imbizo* campaign that began in 2001 took root as the public responded with enthusiasm to the opportunity to interact directly with the executive.

The annual mass multimedia campaign following the State of the Nation Address was supplemented with a second one in the second half of the year, with a further shift towards the use of media that reaches more citizens more directly in the languages they prefer, including media accessible to people with disabilities.

BuaNews is beginning to come into its own as a development information service that is both capacitating community media and making a mark in the established media.

The process towards the transformation of the advertising and marketing industries saw a second round of Parliamentary Hearings that brought government and the private sector closer to agreement

on targets and timeframes that should bring about more representative media placement of advertising.

Together, these steps represent a substantial extension of the communication infrastructure in a way that begins to redress imbalances deriving from our past.

At the same time, the system established to ensure more coherent and integrated government communication under the leadership of the Cabinet has begun to function as intended.

The integration of communication in the central structures of governance is consolidating. Cabinet, through its committees, now approves cluster communication strategies drafted by communication clusters and processed by the FOSAD clusters of Directors-General who oversee implementation.

Cabinet's regular discussion of current affairs from a communication perspective reflects the importance attached to communication.

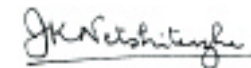
Following the first-ever conference of local government communicators hosted by the South African Local Government Association in June 2002, GCIS and the Department of Provincial and Local Government are supporting efforts to enhance communication capacity in the local sphere of government.

Improving South Africa's image in the world is yet another strategic objective where a period of planning and preparation is issuing in action, as the Brand South Africa campaign develops.

Also in the international sphere we have started more systematically to develop our relations with our counterparts in southern Africa and further afield. We are working closely with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Secretariat on various NEPAD initiatives.

Making this kind of progress has necessitated continuing transformation of GCIS itself, both in terms of representivity and orientation as communicators as well as in improvements in administrative procedures. While recording the progress made, GCIS is also conscious of the need to improve. Further, as major programmes approach the completion of their current phases, attention is being given to new phases and new targets, the better to meet the communication needs of government and the information needs of the public.

The details are set out in this report.



JK NETSHITENZHE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: GCIS



GCIS Corporate Strategy (April 2002 – March 2005)

Vision

Helping to meet the communication and information needs of government and the people, to ensure a better life for all.

Mission

GCIS' mission is to provide leadership in government communication and ensure that the public is informed of government's implementation of its mandate.

Strategic objectives

1. Ensure that the voice of government is heard.
2. Foster a more positive communication environment.
3. Have a clear understanding of the public information needs and government's communication needs.
4. Set high standards for government communication.

These objectives will be achieved by having the following elements in our strategic approach:

GCIS approach

1. Providing leadership in government communication

GCIS must take responsibility for ensuring government is communicating interactively with the public and for the communication of government's vision and approaches to broad areas. GCIS needs to be at the forefront of analysis of the communication environment so that it can identify initiatives to be taken in enhancing the work of government and is also able to respond effectively when required.

2. Research and information gathering

The Government communication system as a whole needs to base its work on soundly researched approaches. GCIS will play a key role in identifying areas of communication research as well as receiving relevant research reports from other sectors. Furthermore, intimate knowledge of government's poli-

cies, programmes and implementation will further enhance communication. There is therefore a need to package information on government's Programme of Action.

3. Improving on information delivery to the public

GCIS will need to intensify the provision of basic information to the public about the rights of citizens, how to take advantage of government's socio-economic programmes, and general progress in the development of policy and its implementation. Niche information products will also be required. Information products of government departments will need to be planned well in advance so that they can be pre-tested and distributed to target audiences in time. The distribution strategy should facilitate better access to products by the identified target audiences. The media used must be in line with development communication principles.

4. Developing better alliances in the communication environment

GCIS must take overall responsibility for improving relations between government and the media, advertising agencies, designers and other sectors (economic, health, social, etc.). It must play a role in helping to transform the media and advertising industry. To achieve this, GCIS shall work through the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) to help in establishing and sustaining community and small commercial media much closer to cities. It must develop closer relations with identified agenda setters.

Key issues

1. Giving greater direction to government communication

- GCIS needs to ensure it has both the capacity to arrive at quick, accurate analysis of the environment as well as the ability to implement rapid responses. This will assist in making its advisory role to Cabinet even more meaningful.

- Attention will be paid to strengthening and integrating the Government communication system. This will take the form of Heads of Communication being part of the pool of project leaders, taking greater responsibility for transversal campaigns.
- The definition of government communication system must be extended to include critical South African missions.
- There must be a clearly understood cycle beginning with end-of-year evaluations, the development of the Government Communication Strategy and Communication Programme, and finalisation of departmental and cluster plans/strategies.
- GCIS will need to play a role in developing the capacity of provincial government communicators and developing/ implementing a strategy for working with local government.

2. Raising the standard of government communication

- GCIS must ensure that the *Imbizo* approach of interactive governance takes root throughout government.
- The implementation of the GCIS Peer Review Process will ensure that in the medium term a uniform standard of excellence is achieved among Heads of Communication.
- GCIS must play an active role in advising communication components on their development requirements.
- The GCIS audit of communication capacity must identify shortcomings in the system as well as where there may be overcapacity.
- GCIS must assist in content development and quality control over critical information products, including government websites.
- With the assertion of the International Marketing Council, GCIS must begin playing a greater role in co-ordinating government's efforts and enhancing the communication capacity of South Africa missions.
- GCIS will help departments in building/strengthening partnerships with key stakeholders, including for community purposes.

3. Impacting on the communication environment

- Vehicles such as the MDDA and Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) will contribute towards establishing a more representative communication environment.
- Regular environment scanning with special attention to content analysis and the media agenda will be required.
- Better research into public information needs.
- GCIS needs to establish a better system for monitoring the implementation and impact of government's Programme of Action so that it is able to communicate government's implementation of its mandate.
- More attention will need to be paid to building relations with civil society structures, especially media organisations, the Advertising Agencies Authority, Design Council, non-governmental organisations, training institutes etc.
- GCIS will need to ensure wider use of BuaNews

4. Smarter working GCIS

- GCIS must develop a set of core competencies, which its communicators must possess.
- GCIS must make better and fuller use of information communication technologies, both in management of the organisation as well as in communication.
- Continued institutionalisation of project management in GCIS.
- The Business Process Re-engineering initiative must proceed to ensure continuous implementation and alignment of GCIS.
- All measures, including development plans and clear target setting must be utilised to enhance the performance of staff and the attainment of excellence.
- Greater integration of work by the different directorates.
- GCIS should instil the culture of learning from our experiences.

5. Key campaigns

Theme one: Building a more efficient, people-centred government for expanded access to social services and to push back the frontiers of poverty (Governance and Administration Cluster).

Focus issues:

- *Batho Pele*
- MPPCs
- Fighting corruption in the Public Service.

Theme two: Building a people's contract for Africa's renewal in a more peaceful world (International Cluster)

Focus issues:

- New Partnership for Africa's Development/African Union
- Southern African Development Community
- International Marketing Campaign.

Theme three: Building a people's contract for growth and development (Economic, Investment and Employment Cluster).

Focus issues:

- Growth and Development Summit
- Mass campaign on economic opportunities
- Black Economic Empowerment.

Theme four: Building a people's contract for a safer and more secure South Africa (Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster).

Focus issues:

- Reduction of crime against women and children
- Release of crime statistics
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report
- 16 Days of Activism – no violence against women and children.

Theme five: Building a people's contract for a caring and committed society working towards sustainable social growth and development (Social Cluster).

Focus issues:

- Intensification of social grants registration
- Food Security Programme
- Free basic services

- Moral renewal.

Theme six: Transversal campaigns

- *Imbizo*
- HIV/AIDS
- Celebrations of 10 years of democracy
- Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme and Urban Renewal Programme
- Elections 2004.

Theme seven: GCIS projects.

- GCIS Budget Vote
- Transformation of the advertising and marketing industry
- Post mid-year Cabinet *Lekgotla* communication
- Government Communicators Awards
- Opening of Parliament
- *Bua Briefs*
- Unmediated communication products
- Enterprise project management.