Recommendations Functions and Responsibilities

LOCATING GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS:
The GCIS and the Presidency

It is recommended that the Presidency appoint a chief of communications with the necessary political and professional skills to head the Government Communication and Information System.

This will be the most senior person in government communications and should, apart from professional skills, be a person who commands respect, credibility and have considerable experience in the communications field. It is recommended that:

The Head of Communications report to the Presidency and Cabinet.

The Head of Communications be responsible for the three functions of the GCIS (namely media liaison, communications services and provincial and local liaison).

The Head of Communications sit, ex officio, on the Communications 2000 committee and be responsible for liaison between the committee and government.

Recommendation 27

A person with the necessary political and professional skills and credibility be appointed to lead the GCIS.

Recommendation 28

The Head of the GCIS report to the Presidency and be the chief communications official in government.

Recommendation 29

The head of the GCIS be overall in charge of the three chief areas of government communications, assisted by senior people responsible for media liaison, communication services and community and local liaison.

Recommendation 30

The head of the GCIS serve as an ex officio member of the Communication 2000 committee and liaise between the committee and government.

COMMUNICATIONS 2000:
An advisory body

Communications 2000 is conceived as a professional advisory and consultative committee, charged with the development of policy and facilitation of the transformation process over a certain (recommended two-year) period. Communications 2000 will report to the Presidency via the head of communications.

It is proposed that Communications 2000 be responsible, in consultation with the Presidency, for advising on the restructuring and establishment of the GCIS. It shall, as and where appropriate or requested to do so, work with other government bodies.

Its areas of responsibility may include:

Restructuring:

- the initiation of an audit of communications capacity in government;
- advising on the process of restructuring necessary to effect the transformation of government communications according to the GCIS model;
- advising on the development of framework and modus operandi of the CSA;
- acting as adviser with regard to restructuring in various government structures and bodies.

> **Recommendation 31**
>
> It is proposed that Communications 2000 be responsible for advising government during the restructuring and transformation process, and assisting with professional advice on the setting up of the GCIS.

Human Resources

Oversight and advice on the development of a human resources plan for government communications, including:

- the creation of criteria towards the development of a recognised professional stream of communicators within the public service with appropriate accreditation and professional requirements;
- development and oversight of national training and capacity building within the GCIS, including an audit of present capacity and needs;

> **Recommendation 32**
>
> It is proposed that Communications 2000 be responsible for advising on a human resources plan towards the development of a professional stream of communicators. This will include the development of criteria, including affirmative action; national training & capacity building; conducting an internal personnel skills and needs audit.

Operations

Advising on the development of suitable criteria for cost effective outsourcing and bulk buying, according to specified 'qualifiers' and activated through a variety of processes, including twinning, mentorships, and so on.

Recommendation 33

It is proposed that Communications 2000 be responsible for advising on the development of criteria for cost effective out-sourcing and bulk buying to be conducted by the CSA on behalf of the GCIS.

International Capacity

Initiating an assessment of international communications capacity and needs; advising on the development of an integrated international communication plan to promote South Africa globally with regard particularly to:

- capacity and resources in foreign missions;

- expansion of delivery of information to foreign missions via Internet and other means;

- improving communications channels between ministries and South Africa's foreign missions;

- assisting with the development of an overseas visitors programme to be coordinated via the CSA.

It is therefore proposed that Communications 2000 be responsible for:

Recommendation 34

Assessing and advising on South Africa's communication capacity abroad: assessing of capacity and needs; improving channels and expanding delivery of information.

Recommendation 35

Advising on the development of a coherent foreign visitors' programme and capacity.

Accessibility

Advising on the development and oversight of national policies with regard to accessibility of language.

Recommendation 36

It is proposed that Communications 2000 be responsible for advising and consulting on the development of policy and programmes to advance accessibility of language and communications in line with the GCIS plan.

Media Diversity

There is a need to embark on a number of initiatives to increase media diversity, such as:

- the promotion of and advising on a subsidy system for the funding of media diversity;

- the promotion of and advising on support mechanisms for community print and broadcast media;

- the exploration of mechanisms, including legislation, to facilitate access by all print media to a fair and equitable distribution system;

- advising on the development of partnership arrangements with sectors involved in the delivery of information at community level.

Recommendation 37

Communications 2000 shall be responsible for promoting and advising on the subsidy and support mechanisms to be adopted for the promotion of media diversity.

Recommendation 38

Communications 2000 shall explore, advise, encourage and consult on avenues for partnership with sectors engaged in information delivery at community level.

Management by Objectives

There is a need to establish a systematic budgeting and planning process for government-wide communications planning. This requires: clear criteria for measuring communications budgets; common benchmarking standards; an annual cycle of planning; affirmative action policies; support and promotion of SMMEs.

It is proposed that the GCIS should establish these new criteria and in conjunction with Communications 2000, and pilot the process for the financial years 1997/98 and 1998/9.

Communications expenditure in all departments and other structures should be measured against objectives. Costly duplication should be highlighted in this process.

Recommendation 39

It is proposed that the GCIS establish an annual planning cycle for communications budgets with new benchmarking standards. This should be piloted in conjunction with Communi-cations 2000 for the financial years 1997/98 and 1998/9.

Other Matters

Other matters as the Presidency may refer to Communications 2000.

SMALL STREAMLINED AND COST EFFECTIVE:
The Communication Services Agency

The mandate of the CSA is to act as a centre of excellence for a number of core activities within government. It will provide these services itself where required, and will also actively support the development of capacity building for its clients. A key feature will be the provision of a development information service.

The CSA will thus be responsible for the provision of key essential services to government. It will not, by and large, deliver the content or product of messages, but will brief, commission and out source as appropriate, working in close liaison with civil society. It will therefore maintain a very limited in-house production capacity.

THE PRINCIPLES OF SUCH AN APPROACH ARE THAT IT:

- is more cost effective, allowing for bulk buying and strategic planning;
- encourages creativity and excellence in government communications;
- allows for management by objectives;
- builds partnerships with (and allows for capacity building in) civil society.
- promotes affirmative action and SMMEs.

MODUS OPERANDI

It is proposed that:

- the Communication Services Agency work under the co-ordination and direction of the head of the GCIS, advised and facilitated by Communications 2000.

  ### Recommendation 40
  It is proposed the CSA work under the direction of the GCIS,
  assisted by Communications 2000.

- the CSA is staffed by professionals in the communications field, with specialised knowledge in the required areas. An understanding of how marketing works and how to brief advertising agencies and other suppliers will be an essential component.
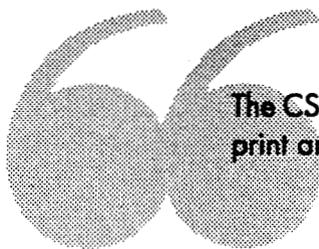
  ### Recommendation 41
  It is proposed the CSA be staffed by professionals in the
  communications field and suitably qualified personnel for
  other functions.

- the clients of the Communication Services Agency will be government: national departments, provincial and local government.

  ### Recommendation 42
  It is proposed the clients of the CSA will be government
  structures at all three tiers.

The CSA will also, and within defined parameters, provide selected services to community print and broadcast media.

Recommendation 43

It is proposed that the CSA provide or facilitate the provision of selected services to the community media.

The CSA will source services from the private sector, with particular attention to criteria aimed at empowering disadvantaged or previously excluded suppliers according to criteria developed by Communications 2000 in consultation with the head of the GCIS. These would include, inter alia:

- expanded criteria to ensure the support of SMMEs, where necessary, twinned either with larger suppliers or with other small and medium sized businesses;

- expanded criteria to ensure the support of production outlets previously excluded by historic or other disadvantage;

- the development of a creative rather than mechanical framework for assessment purposes.

- the development of professional criteria and methods of evaluation.

Recommendation 44

It is proposed the CSA source services from the private sector with particular attention to criteria and qualifiers as developed for the GCIS through Communications 2000.

BULK BUYING AND OUTSOURCING

By allowing departments to act individually as at present, the government is not currently using its substantial buying power in the marketplace to obtain favourable rates. We propose that government departments buy media space through the CSA. In addition, the selection and contracting of advertising and other outsourcing agencies be brought into a system which ensures that advertising targets the real audience, and does not follow historical patterns. Departments could continue to develop messages and work directly with advertising and marketing agents, but considerable savings would be achieved using the CSA to do the buying.

This is borne out by international experience.

Recommendation 45

The CSA will be responsible for the bulk buying of advertising space & selecting and contracting advertising, marketing, research and other communications services on behalf of government.

CAMPAIGN SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT.

Departments need support in the development and management of campaigns. The CSA would have the professional capacity to provide such inputs, prepare client briefs and help oversee and monitor production quality and consistency -while the GCIS would ensure co-ordination and avoid clashes with other campaigns.

Recommendation 46

The CSA will act as a consultant, providing support with various aspects of campaign and other communications work.

TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

There is a need for national programmes to upgrade communication skills for all levels of government. Several media and professional organisations have offered to assist in the development and, indeed, sponsorship, of such programmes.

The proposal is that these sectors be asked to develop a course or courses and ultimately standards for a top notch stream of government communicators in coordination with the GCIS and Communications 2000.

Recommendation 47

The CSA will be responsible for the co-ordination of training & capacity building in line with courses developed with the professional sector.

It is the view of the Task Group that training/orientation in communications should be extended to ministers and to members of parliament.

Recommendation 48

It is proposed that Ministers and Members of Parliament receive a short training/orientation course in communications.

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Opinion polls and research form an important part of the work of most governments. Three kinds of research are envisaged.

Campaign Evaluation

Evaluation by professional research agencies of advertising and other campaigns commissioned by government measured against targeted objectives;

Opinion polls

The CSA would maintain a small specialised unit to link with Cabinet and departments to ensure that opinion surveys are commissioned. The purpose is to evaluate ongoing government performance, and to solicit the views of the public on matters of concern. This would generally be outsourced to dedicated research bodies.

Monitoring

In addition, there should be a standard media clipping/summary service available to all departments and other appropriate clients (e.g. embassies) on a daily basis each morning. This could be done in-house using existing resources under the new management structure, or out-sourced. The current duplication of this service throughout government is wasteful and expensive.

Recommendation 49

It is proposed that the CSA be responsible for ensuring that research is conducted and that government is kept informed through both large-scale research and opinion polls, internal monitoring of daily performance and a media clipping service.

'DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION' SERVICE

The CSA should develop and deliver a news service which collates and summarises key government information for community media, local government structures and community organisations which cannot afford to purchase and receive commercial news services or are otherwise unable to access government information.

Recommendation 50

It is proposed that the CSA be responsible for ensuring that community media, local government structures and remote communities receive key government communication on request through the proposed development information service.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

South Africa needs to develop a comprehensive government home page on the Internet, and all departments, provinces and other government bodies should be able to integrate national data bases into such a system. The CSA should play a leading role in this area. Thus:

- The system should be professionally designed within the framework of the GCIS, and in consultation with information system technologists, so as to provide maximum access both by information provider and information receiver;

- In this process, existing efforts and initiatives - both governmental, parastatal and community based - need to be linked via the network to provide ease of access;

- Existing networks, including the Foreign Affairs network, should be linked to the government network;

- The information delivery systems developed by the Open Democracy structures needs to be linked into the network;

- On the principle that this will be the common vehicle for all government bodies, the CSA must (internally or through outsourcing) facilitate the development of this comprehensive network, including the widest possible network of users. The principle should be multi-use with the maximum supply of non-confidential information;

- There be an obligation on all government structures to supply key information to this system.
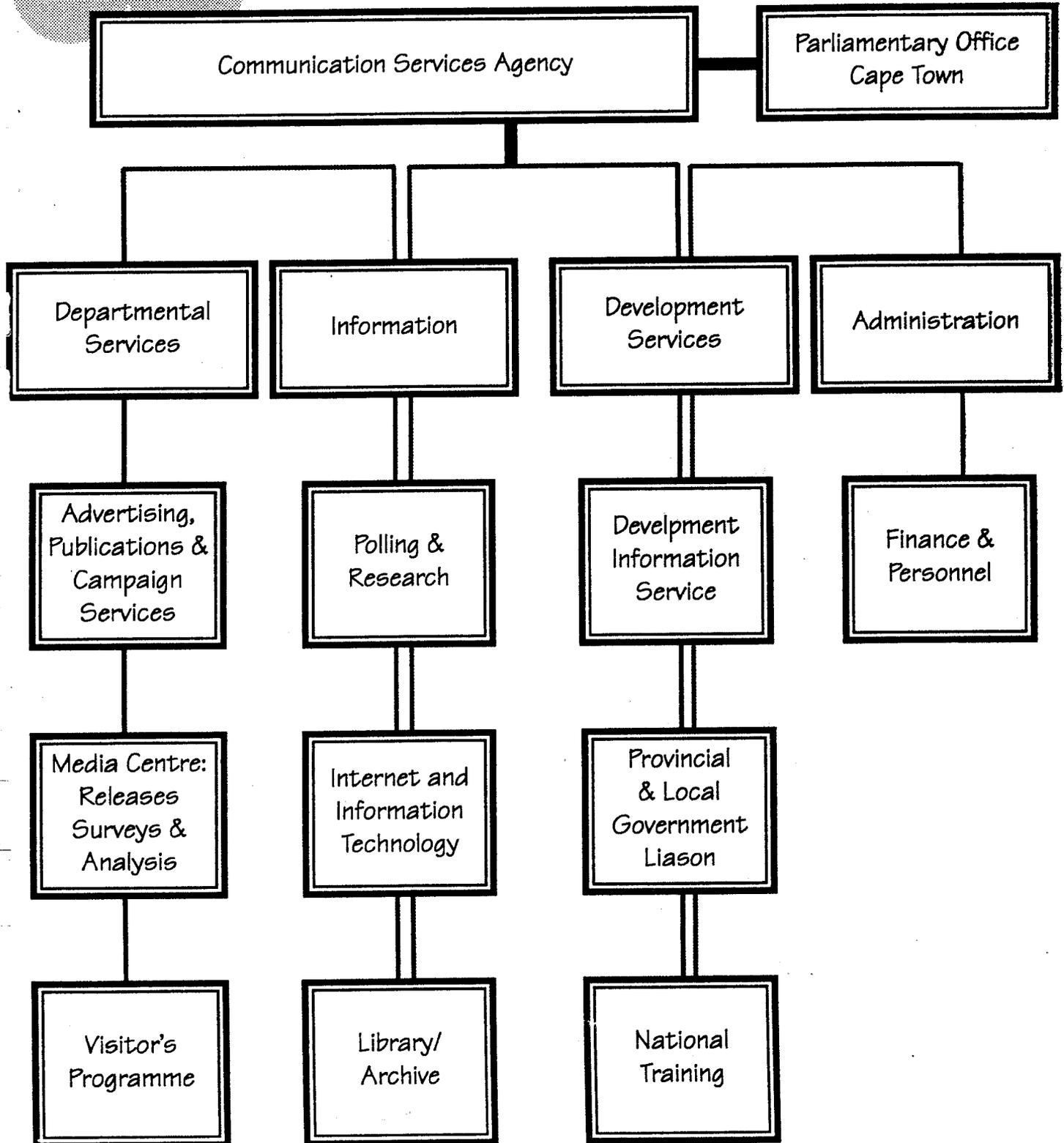
Recommendation 51

It is proposed that the CSA be responsible for ensuring the setting up, advising and training in relation to a comprehensive, common use information network designed to provide access to a linked government information system.

OVERSEAS VISITORS' PROGRAMMES

The co-ordination of overseas visitors programmes needs attention. At present it falls between Foreign Affairs, Parliament, various departments and sometimes SACS. Foreign missions in this country find this difficult to deal with. Even high profile visits sometimes fall victim to this unco-ordinated approach.

We therefore recommend that the CSA be responsible for the co-ordination of foreign visits, in close consultation with Foreign Affairs and/or the Head of the GCIS (where a

COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY

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┌──────────────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│  Communication Services Agency   │───│ Parliamentary Office │
│                                  │   │      Cape Town       │
└──────────────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘
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Departmental Services	Information	Development Services	Administration
Advertising, Publications & Campaign Services	Polling & Research	Develpment Information Service	Finance & Personnel
Media Centre: Releases Surveys & Analysis	Internet and Information Technology	Provincial & Local Government Liason	
Visitor's Programme	Library/ Archive	National Training	

state visit is involved) and/or Parliament (where a parliamentary visit is involved). The principle is that the work should be co-operative, well planned and executed.

Centralising information in consultation with the relevant structure and making or facilitating practical arrangements, including press calls where requested to do so;

In the case of state or high profile visits, confirming the programme and ensuring that all details are in place;

In the case of low profile visits, identifying a corps of 'freelance' civil society experts and organisations in appropriate fields to take responsibility for ensuring that the desired contacts are made.

Recommendation 52

We propose that the CSA be responsible for the co-ordination, of a co-operative, well planned and executed foreign visitors' programme (in close consultation with Foreign Affairs and other appropriate bodies and outside institutions).

PROMOTING CORPORATE IDENTITY

The CSA, in consultation with the Head of the GCIS and advised by Communications 2000, should assist the development of a corporate identity for government and consistency in government information.

- There is a variety and lack of identity of documents and publications, letterheads, and so on issued by the government. In many countries all such materials are easily recognised by consumers by the use of a common logo or identifying design. We recommend that such a common linking identity be introduced for all government documents.

- Access to and identification of government buildings would also benefit from some form of recognisable corporate imaging. People need to know how to find the government bodies they are looking for. Currently, this is frequently impossible as buildings are often anonymous and forbidding.

Recommendation 53

It is proposed that all Government buildings have recognisable corporate imaging and that documents & other products have a design or official logo that makes them easily identifiable and accessible.