

# LIMPOPO

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**PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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DEPARTMENT OF  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT & TOURISM

**PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY**

**2019**

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## 1. ACRONYMS

HOD	: Head of Department
IRM	: Information Records Management
LEDET	: Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism
MEC	: Member of Executive Council
MLO	: Media Liaison Officer
SMS	: Senior Member of Staff
SOE's	: State Owned Entities

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **“Annual flagship events”** mean the best or most important events owned or produced by the Department every year;
- 2.2. **“client”** means any person or group of people doing business with the Department;
- 2.3. **“crisis”** means an unforeseen or unexpected event that threatens departmental operations and can have extreme negative consequences. A crisis can be manmade and can impact public safety, lead to financial loss or even reputational damage for the Department. If it is not effectively managed, a crisis can lead to an emergency;
- 2.4. **“event”** means any occasion of importance or significance involving the attendance of numerous people such as staff, stakeholders and cluster partners, members of the industry, community, dignitaries and invited guests. An event may be a once-off, regular or annual occasion;
- 2.5. **“events calendar”** means a composite agenda detailing dates, venues, responsible event manager and objectives of all activities to be undertaken by the Department;

- 2.6. **“executives”** mean persons delegated with authority to decide on departmental issues such as the members of SMS, HOD and the MEC;
- 2.7. **“media”** means various means of communication such as television, radio and newspaper. The term can also be used as a collective noun for the press or news reporting agencies;
- 2.8. **“marketing”** means the systematic planning, implementation and control of a mix of activities intended to bring together stakeholders and partners for the mutually advantageous exchange or transfer of products;
- 2.9. **“news release”** means any form of statement about the Department issued in the form of a notice, press release, warning notifications and departmental announcements;
- 2.10. **“online”** means electronic platforms connected through computers and other electronic devices such as the website and social media;
- 2.11. **“public relations”** mean promotional activities that work to create a strong public image of the Department. These activities include helping the public to understand the Department and its services;
- 2.12. **“public statements”** mean statements submitted to the Legislative organs Such as those dealing with regulatory, legislative, professional and investigative issues. These statements are normally developed by the cabinet cluster committee and are subject to the guidelines for making Public Statements on behalf of the Department;
- 2.13. **“events management team”** means all parties who plan, organize and stage events of LEDET with stakeholders relevant to the function; and
- 2.14. **“stakeholders”** mean people who have interest or have invested within the Department.

### **3. INTRODUCTION**

LEDET aims to have an enabling communication and marketing environment which aligns and coordinates communication activities. This policy helps to ensure that the Department is represented with consistent messages and with one clear voice to all of its stakeholders, both internal and external. It also aims to ensure that communication at all units is well-integrated, coherent, coordinated and consistent, reliable, ethical, open, encourages participation, transformative, professional, credible and effectively managed.

### **4. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

**The purpose and objectives of this policy are as follows:**

- 4.1. To ensure that public relations activities are coordinated provincially when appropriate.
- 4.2. To regulate content and information aimed at promoting the services done by the Department.
- 4.3. To provide guidance in the planning, organising and staging of events across all spheres of operation.
- 4.4. To ensure that events across the Department achieve consistent quality standards.

### **5. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

This policy is applicable to all male and female employees, stakeholders and clients of the Department.

## **6. LEGAL MANDATES**

The Public Relations Policy is guided by the following legal mandates:

- 6.1. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- 6.2. Batho Pele principles
- 6.3. Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998)
- 6.4. Government Communicator's Handbook (2014-2017)
- 6.5. Government Communication Policy, 2017
- 6.6. Limpopo Provincial Communication Strategy (2014-2019)
- 6.7. Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act No. 3 of 2000)
- 6.8. Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000)
- 6.9. Public Service Act, 1994 as amended
- 6.10. Public Service Regulation, 2016
- 6.11. The Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act No. 12 of 2012)

## **7. POLICY PRONOUNCEMENT**

LEDET aims to manage its reputation and image through maintaining a mutual understanding with the public. It is vital for LEDET to gain support and understanding of all forms of media and communication by all its stakeholders and the public at large. Public Relations serves as a way of controlling LEDET's image and how it interfaces with the public and stakeholders through different forms of media and communication.

### **7.1. Elements on Publications**

- 7.1.1. The Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act 12 of 2012) guides the Department through language usage in communication activities. The Department must consider the usage, practicality, resources, regional circumstances and the balance of the needs and preferences of the public in deciding on the official languages to use when communicating.

- 7.1.2. The Department must produce publications that educate, inform and have a legitimate public benefit.
- 7.1.3. The Director: Communication Services must ensure that the publications do not bring the government into disrepute by virtue of their content and the quality of the written content, photographic images or other graphic material. These publications should also respect the relevant copyright and privacy requirements.
- 7.1.4. Forms of documents: Although in many cases the publications are in pdf format, some are in other formats such as Word documents. Electronic official documents should be in a non-modifiable format. All publications must be printed with due regard for the language preferences of the intended audience, including consideration of the visually and hearing impaired and plain-language requirements.
- 7.1.5. Archiving should be in line with the IRM policy.

## **7.2 Events Management**

- 7.2.1. The events calendar should be approved by the HOD on or before 31 March annually. Any Directorate which intends to plan, organize and stage an event must inform the Sub - directorate: Public Relations about the event accompanied by a concept document to register and confirm details of the proposed event by no later than 20 (twenty) working days prior to the event commencing.
- 7.2.2. All departmental events are to be approved by the HOD.
- 7.2.3. Once the events calendar has been approved, the event organizer shall organize preparatory meetings with all key stakeholders of which Communication Services Directorate shall form part of.

7.2.4. 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.

7.2.5. Annual flagship events should be included in the event calendar and notification must be given 3 (three) months in advance.

### **7.3. Crisis communication**

7.3.1. LEDET must strive to avoid crisis. The HOD and the MEC must remain in touch with stakeholders, assess public mood and conduct research or any activities that might help to avert a crisis.

7.3.2. The Director: Communication Services should be made aware of any potential crisis and should manage communication activities to avert or limit a potential crisis.

7.3.3. Any crisis requires immediate communication intervention. The Director: Communication Services must ensure effective communication management in a time of crisis or emergency in order for the Department to maintain or restore the public's confidence.

### **7.4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **7.4.1. Director: Communication Services**

The Director: Communications Services has the following roles and responsibilities:

(a) In the event that the Media Liaison Officer or the authorized departmental official is not available, the Director: Communication Services serves as the designated departmental spokesperson.

(b) The Director: Communication Services or his or her delegate is authorised to



communicate with the media at any time.

- (c) Oversees and monitors the development of departmental publications and provision of content.
- (d) Contributes and oversees departmental speeches, technical and editorial issues including the departmental events.

#### **7.4.2. Media Liaison Officer / Deputy Director: Public Relations**

The MLO has the following roles and responsibilities:

- a) The MLO or his or her delegate is authorised to communicate to the media at any time.
- b) Writes and issues press releases.
- c) Manages and writes speeches for the MEC.
- d) Provides, advises and make recommendations on communications to the HOD and MEC.
- e) Conveys the decisions of the highest decision making authority of the Executive.
- f) Chairs media briefings and liaise with all relevant parties to ensure that issues that might have arisen in the environment are clearly articulated.

#### **7.4.3. Deputy and Assistant Director: Public Relations**

The Deputy and Assistant Director: Public Relations have the following roles and responsibilities:

- (a) Responsible for the following services that enhance the visibility of the Department:
  - (i) Key messages and image of the Department through the judicious use of a variety of communications;
  - (ii) Availability of online content;
  - (iii) Technical and editorial issues;
  - (iv) Events management in coordination with program owners; and
  - (v) All news releases on behalf of the Department that are issued by Public Relations office.
  
- (b) Content, editing and coordination of the following: Publications, marketing materials, internal communication, media relations and online content.
  
- (c) Manages and coordinates with SMS when media requests information on the following:
  - (i) Questions of policy or issues for which a spokesperson has been designated;
  - (ii) Questions for which the Department's response has to be prepared;
  - (iii) Responses that require two or more sources in the Department; and
  - (iv) Programs and projects continuation releases.

#### **7.4.5. Communications officers**

- (a) Coordinate services that enhance the visibility of the Department such as signage and exhibitions.
  
- (b) Accurately project the key messages and image of the Department through the judicious use of a variety of communications.
  
- (c) Promote the Department's integrated marketing, planning and identity standards.

- (d) Ensure that online content is available.
- (e) Coordinate the departmental events with program owners.
- (f) Liaise with members of the administration when the media request information on the following:
  - (i) questions of policy or issues for which a spokesperson has been designated;
  - (ii) questions for which the Department's response has been prepared;
  - (iii) responses that require two or more sources in the Department; and
  - (iv) programs and projects continuation releases.
- (g) Issue news releases on behalf of the Department at district level.
- (h) Provide content and coordinate publications, marketing materials, internal communication and media relations.
- (i) Provide departmental information to individuals and media at district level.
- (J) Provide official contact details of relevant officials when requested.

## **8. DEFAULT**

Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy will be dealt with in terms of the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council Resolution No. 1 of 2003: Disciplinary Code and Procedures for the Public Service.

## **9. INCEPTION DATE**

The inception date of this policy is thirty (30) days after approval by the Head of Department.

**10. REVIEW**

This policy shall be reviewed after every thirty-six (36) months.

**11. TERMINATION**

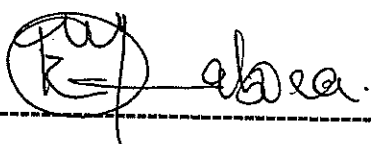
This policy shall remain in force until it is withdrawn or reviewed.

**12. ENQUIRIES**

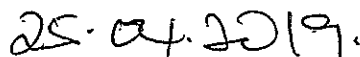
Enquiries with regard to any matter relating to this policy shall be directed to the office of the Director: Communication Services.

**13. APPROVAL**

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Alsea', is written over a horizontal dashed line.

**HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: LEDET**

A handwritten date '25.04.2019.' is written in black ink above a horizontal dashed line.

**DATE**