



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT
OF
PUBLIC WORKS

Policy Name	Communication and Media Policy
The revision/ version of the Policy	02
Domain	Communication and Stakeholder Management

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1. INTRODUCTION

The communication and media policy was formulated to provide the Limpopo Department of Public Works (LDPW) and its employees with guidelines and procedural requirements to the challenges facing government communicators within and outside the workplace.

It is therefore important that there is uniformity, clarity and consistency in the manner in which LDPW communicators when it markets itself and that all employees understand their individual roles in this process.

Employees are expected to adhere to this policy.

“Everyone has the right to access:-

- a. Any information held by the State and
- b. Any information that is held by another person which is required for the exercise or protection of any rights”

To give effect to this constitutional right the Public Service Regulation (PSR) part 1 (H.4) of chapter 1 (PRS/1/1/H.4) requires the Head of Department (HOD) to establish a policy on how employees in his or her department may communicate with the printed or other public media.

The Public Access to Information Act also obliges government to provide the public with information relating to government services through high level of transparency, accountability, openness, so as to make informed choices and improve their lives for the better.

2. NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED BY THE COMMUNICATION POLICY

Communication should be effected within a well defined policy framework. The necessity of a Communication Policy stems from the need to approach the communication function of the department in a systematic, efficient and effective manner.

This Communication Policy aims to provide comprehensive guidelines:-

- For assisting the Head of Department (HOD) to communicate effectively and efficiently to the departments entire target audience, eliminate communication related problems and
- In the execution and implementation of communication functions/activities by delineating what information is to be communicated, why it should be communicated, who should be the

communicator, when should communication take place and how messages should be communicated.

In this regard communication should be understood to be about information sharing in relation to the progress made in planning, executing and reporting outcomes related to the Departmental Strategy.

Communication should be about empowering citizens and about the Departments' Programme of Action to enhance community participation. Furthermore, this policy is intended to improve the external Departmental communication for effective service delivery. Communication in general should adhere to the appropriate legislative and policy framework.

2.1. Objectives of the communication policy

In addition to addressing stated specific needs, this policy is intended to achieve the following Departmental Objectives:-

- To coordinate effective, accurate, reliable information management systems.
- To communicate information to the public and the media in a consistent manner for effective management of information flow.
- To designate individual to communicate with the media and internal staff.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of communication activities in relation to the objectives stated herein and the departmental priorities.

3. TYPES AND FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

- Radio slots,
- Roadshows,
- Izimbizo,
- Media releases and statements,
- Radio Advertisements on Departmental activities,
- Print Media Advertisements on Departmental activities,
- Media briefings and Networking,
- Opinion process,
- Human Resource Recruitment advertisement,
- Advertisements on the Invitation of Tenders and Public comments on policies and legislation,
- Project launches (Departmental Events),
- Workshops,
- Policy related issue, and
- Departmental corporate identity.

4. COMMUNICATION WITH THE MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC

- An employee shall not release official information to the public unless he/she has the necessary authority (Public Service Regulations 1/11/E);
- An employee shall not disclose any official information for personal gain or the gain of others (Public Service Regulation 2/C.5.4);
- An employee shall not in his or her official capacity irresponsibly criticize government policy at a Public gathering or in a publication or in the printed, electron or other media (Public Service Regulation 1//HS);
- An employee shall honour the confidentiality of matters, documents and discussions, classified or implied as being confidential or secret;
- Any inquiries by the public/media relating to the Department of Public Works activities shall be forwarded to the Head of Department (HOD) as a first line of entity;
- The Media Liaison Officer and Head of Communications in the Department; should coordinate any information that needs to be communicated to the media by the Department in consultation with the Head Of Department
- The Directorate: Communication Services shall provide ongoing media analysis and provide such to the MEC and HOD on hardcopy, and to staff through e-mail; and
- Only authorized persons are allowed to comment on policy statements and politically related issues.

5. DESIGNATED PERSONS TO COMMUNICATE TO THE MEDIA

For consistency and accountability purposes, the Public Service Regulation part II (E) of chapter 1 requires that not all employees of the department unless delegated to do so would communicated to the media.

The Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA) policy guidelines specify persons who are authorized to communicate to the media.

6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The delivery of communication in the Department(s) subject to the following principles:-

- Batho Pele
- Pro-activity and responsible communicator
- Courtesy

- Confidentiality
- Openness and transparency
- Provision of information that improves lives of citizens
- Timelines
- Respect and professionalism

6.1. **Language**

The obligation to inform the public includes the obligation to communicate effectively. Information about the government policies, programmes and service should be clear, objective, simple and presented in a manner that is understandable and readable to the target group. Messages should convey information relevant to public needs, use simple language and understandable to the target group, expressed in a clear and consistent style within the context of respecting the equality of languages.

The Department shall endeavor to translate its critical policies in official languages particularly languages spoken in Limpopo (English, Afrikaans, Sepedi, Tshivenda and XiTsonga)

7. **INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

The role of internal communication is to keep employees informed about the goals and priorities of an institutions development, changes of new initiatives affecting their work. Internal communication is also a vehicle for creating corporate culture and sense of community among the staff.

7.1. **Communicating to all staff members by means of a simple e-mail.**

Only the HOD can communicate to all staff members by means of an e-mail addressed to all staff members. All other e-mails addressed to all staff should be approved by HOD with exception to:

- News of the Day e-mails and
- Notice of Delegation e-mails.

7.2. **Communication within Directorates**

Every Directorate should convene a directorate meeting once a month as a forum not only for management but its entire internal staff as well. This method of internal communication is to be an obligation for all Senior Managers.

- Internal Communication by the Directorate Communication Services;
The internal communication activities coordinated by the directorate should have the following outputs: prepare, edit and convey management information to staff by means of bulletins, pamphlets, poster, newsletters, videos and notice boards.
- Convey correspondence such as circulars to all staff; and
- Contribute material to update the website.

7.3. Crisis Communication

In the event of a crisis the Executive Authority, HOD, Legal Section and any relevant government official shall meet as soon as possible to plan appropriate response/action.

These individuals, also known as the crisis committee may appoint a spokesperson in the event of a communication crisis.

All major projects of the Department should have a specific, clearly defined contingency plan for crisis communication.

7.4. Events management in the Department of Public Works

Every Directorate intending to have an event initiated by their Unit as part of their annual plan is required to do the following:-

- Submit calendar of unit's events to communication services at the beginning of every financial year;
- Draft a concept document prior to any preparations for that event in consultation with communication services;
- Plan the event in partnership with communication services from the start; and
- The Directorate and Communication Services should then form an events committee for that specific event.

7.5. Printing of Departmental documents and any other thing that promotes the image of the Department

- Communication Services is responsible for the facilitation of printing of all departmental publications e.g. Annual Report, budget speech, citizens report, brochures, pamphlets, etc.
- Communication services function with regard to the above publication is limited to ensuring that the look and feel (design and lay out) is in line with the provincial guidelines on the usage of colours, logos and photographs of the Executive Authority and relevant HODs.
- A communication service is not responsible for the coordination and compilation of information or content of the publication, with exception to newsletters.
- A communication service is not responsible for the printing of Tender documents or any documents that is not meant for the purpose of promoting the image of the department.

7.6. Exhibition

The obligation to inform the public includes the obligation to communicate the Departments functions through exhibitions.

- The role of the communication services in this regard is to take the lead in coordinating exhibitions.
- Communication services should form and convene the exhibition committee.



8. INTERNET AND WEBSITE POLICY

The intranet/website would be managed by GITO as a component. The website content should be available to the audience all over the world. It should have high quality, accurate and relevant content that would enhance the image of the department all over the world. The following are minimum guidelines relevant for the content development and management of the website:

- English language will be used in all content placed on internet;
- The language used on the website should be formal, non racial, non-sexist;
- Website should be updated regularly;
- Content to be loaded on the website should be signed off by HOD or appropriate delegated official prior to placing after thorough editing and other quality control procedures;
- All SMS should supply relevant information about their directorates and provide contact person for the website content development team;
- A monthly report should be produced by website management team with details of the utilization of the website by the public;
- All official statements should be promptly placed on the website. The spokesperson/MLO should ensure that this content is supplied to the person responsible timeously;
- Placing of unauthorized content on the website is prohibited; and
- Viewing of pornographic materials or any other related material is prohibited.

9. COMMITMENT

The Limpopo Department of Public Works commits itself to provide adequate information to the public, staff and the media in relation to its activities, in order that the public individually or through representation may understand, respond to and influence the development and implantation of government policies and programmes. This approach to communication shall be carried out through formal and informal exchanges in a dialogue that is continuous, open, relevant, understandable and reliable, however in line with the Departments Values.

Approved by


EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY

25/07/13
DATE