



**LIMPOPO**  
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF  
ROADS AND TRANSPORT**

## **COMMUNICATION POLICY**

## TABLE OF CONTENT

	PAGES
1. Purpose	3
2. The function of Communications	3
3. Key Performance Areas (KPA's)	3
4. Planning and Evaluation	5
5. Corporate Identity	5
6. Reflecting Diversity	6
7. Environment Analysis	6
8. Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement	7
9. Spokesperson	7
10. Communication with Media	7
11. Crisis Communication	8
12. Operational Requirements during Crisis Communication	9
13. Monitoring of Policy	10
14. Amendment of the Policy	11

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the department's communication is well coordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the information needs of the employees and citizens.
- 1.2 Thus the need for a Communication Policy that aims:
- a) to highlight the working policies, programmes and actions of the department;
  - b) to create awareness of the rights, benefits and department's obligation to citizens;
  - c) to consult citizens and take account of people's interests and concerns when establishing priorities, developing policies, and planning programs and services;
  - d) to persuade citizens to act in accordance with approved policies in defined circumstances; and
  - e) to ensure value for money and transparency.

## **2. The function of Communications**

- 2.1 Communications is central to the work and management of the department. As a function of good management, open and proactive communication ensures that the public receives government information, and that the views and concerns of the public are taken into account in the planning, management and evaluation of policies, programs, services and initiatives.
- 2.2 In budgeting for and delivering communication services, it is essential that all elements of the communications function be properly resourced. Sufficient resources must be allocated to ensure that requirements of the Communications Policy are fulfilled.

## **3. Key Performance Areas (KPA's)**

The communications function in the department includes delivery of six key communication performance areas. These KPA's are as follows:

- a) **Communication strategy and programme:** This includes the development and implementation of annual communication and awareness strategy and programmes based on departmental programmes, priorities and milestones. The strategy will ensure



that the department has a coherent, consistent, sustained, proactive and effective programme of communication based on its priorities. Linked to this is the ongoing development and implementation of targeted communication strategies around key priority areas.

- b) **Building departmental communication systems:** Flowing from the communication strategy and programmes are the annual framework calendar of key departmental public activities and milestones. These are essential tools for effective planning, the integration of communication at a strategic level, the refinement of departmental communication policies, models, resources and structures to better serve strategic communication and broader departmental objectives.
- c) **Media liaison systems and services:** This programme is aimed at ensuring that the department is more effective in using the media in making the news, setting the news agenda, addressing negative perceptions, ensuring effective and accurate media coverage and effectively utilising the media to communicate with the public.
- d) **The production of accessible departmental media:** This programme will be used to maximise the department's ability to reach citizens in its own words in a manner that is unmediated by the mass media or parties external to government. Of central importance is the production of basic, accessible departmental media that provides information on departmental services (i.e. website and pamphlets) and programmes to empower citizens and communities to access their rights and improve their quality of life.
- e) **Public participation and awareness:** This programme is about taking government to the people (imbizos) and empowering people to influence governance and service delivery on an ongoing basis and to participate in improving their own lives. It includes direct interaction and engagement with civil society and with the people in general; determining people's information needs and providing the information they can use.
- f) **Internal communication** remains important in ensuring motivated and well-informed public servants who have the will and the capacity to effectively deliver quality services to the people. Communication Services will play an important role in advising and facilitating internal communication in the form of internal newsletters and other communication mechanisms, as well as internal events and walkabouts.

#### **4. Planning and Evaluation**

- 4.1 Branches must integrate communication planning into their annual business planning process as an integral part of business operations. The communication plans must be periodically reviewed, evaluated and updated in conjunction with the business planning and budgeting cycle.
- 4.2 Branches that are responsible for core functions and programmes must:
- a) ensure that communication planning forms an integral part of program and policy initiatives and that communication requirement are fully accounted for within budgets and financial plans;
  - b) ensure that the public environment, particularly the views and needs of citizens is assessed at all stages of an initiative and reflected in communication plans;
  - c) ensure communication plans and strategies for policies, programs, services and initiatives are developed collaboratively with input from responsible managers;
  - d) reflect government themes and messages in communication plans and strategies;
  - e) work collaboratively with other departments to develop joint communication plans and strategies in areas of mutual interest;
  - f) track the performance of communication products and measure results achieved against objectives set in communication and business plans;
  - g) evaluate the effectiveness, including cost-effectiveness, of communication programs and campaigns developed in support of policy or program initiatives and make improvements or adjustments as needed to ensure the effectiveness of plans, strategies and activities;
  - h) evaluate periodically (after 12months) the degree to which their management practices comply with the requirements of this policy; and
  - i) include an assessment of the degree of compliance with this policy in their internal evaluations and reviews.

#### **5. Corporate Identity**

- 5.1. A clear and consistent corporate identity is required to assist citizens in recognizing, accessing and assessing the policies, programs, services and initiatives of the department.
- 5.2. To maintain a recognizable and unified corporate identity throughout the department, the department must ensure that its buildings, facilities,



programs and activities are clearly identified in accordance with the national Corporate Identity Manual (CIM).

- 5.3. The department must manage communication designs and presentations along common lines and in a co-ordinated manner, consistent with the CIM.
- 5.4. The department must give prominence to the official symbols of the provincial coat of arms by displaying the coat of arms in all information and communication materials, regardless of medium for external use. The purpose of this is to:
  - a) enable citizens to clearly recognize activities of the department by means of consistent identification;
  - b) apply the requirements of the Corporate Identity Manual in promoting a common and unified look in all communication activities, to ensure accountability and public recognition of the department;
  - c) reflect key departmental themes and messages in information and communication materials so that overarching goals and departmental priorities are consistently identified and communicated to citizens and employees.
- 5.5. The different applications of corporate identity range from the permanent media such as stationery and signage to the transitory media such as printed material, advertising, audio-visuals materials, etc.

## **6. Reflecting Diversity**

- 6.1. The department must ensure its publications and other communication materials depict the diverse nature of South Africa's society in a fair, representative and inclusive manner.
- 6.2. The department must be sensitive to differences within the province. The department must ensure a balance in its communication plans and activities so that the needs and interests of the whole populace are reflected and addressed.

## **7. Environment Analysis**

- 7.1 The department must routinely monitor and analyse the public environment as it relates to its policies, programs, services and initiatives. The aim is to evaluate and address public needs and expectations effectively and to anticipate issues that may arise and to formulate appropriate response strategies. The department should use a variety of tools including citizen feedback, inquiry analysis, media monitoring and opinion research.

- 7.2 As an element of effective environment analysis, the department must identify and track current and emerging public issues and trends reported by the media, including the usage of the GCIS rapid response system.

## **8. Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement**

- 8.1 Communication requirements must be taken into account in the planning, management and evaluation of consultation and citizen engagement activities. Open and responsive communications are critical to the success of public consultations, as is factual information presented to participants in plain language.
- 8.2 The department must inform the public about opportunities to participate in public consultation and citizen engagement initiatives. This may be done through the web site, letters of invitation, notices to the media, paid advertising and other vehicles normally used by the department to communicate with the public.
- 8.3 The department must ensure that communication or information materials prepared for consultative purposes are well identified as being from the Department of Roads and Transport (LDRT), according to the requirements of the Corporate Identity Manual.

## **9. Spokesperson**

The following shall be regarded as the official and authorized departmental spokespeople:

- a. The MEC as chief spokesperson
- b. The Head Of Department
- c. The Media Liaison Officer (MLO) of the MEC
- d. The Head of Communication
- e. Experts in the various fields of expertise and other officials as instructed by the MEC or Head of Department.

## **10. Communication with Media**

- 10.1. In terms of the Public Service Regulations, no employee shall, in his/her official capacity irresponsibly criticize government in public or through the media or any publication and this principle shall equally apply in terms of this policy.



- 10.2. Designated spokespersons are restricted to discussing matters of fact or already approved government policy in an open, on-the-record basis. Off-the-record background briefings or interviews are only permitted in exceptional circumstances and are subject to prior political approval. All speculation and questions on proposed policy should be referred to the MEC.
- 10.3. Political and policy media statements may only be issued by Media Liaison Officer (MLO) or any other official instructed by the MEC.
- 10.4. The MLO must ensure that the MEC is briefed before any statements are issued on behalf of the department.
- 10.5. Enquiries from the media should be directed to the MLO.
- 10.6. General Managers shall ensure that accurate information is provided to the MLO for media enquiries in a speedy manner.
- 10.7. The Head of Department, MLO or any official delegated by the Head of Department shall serve as the central point of contact and shall, where required, redirect the enquiry to the relevant component.
- 10.8. The Office of the MEC shall be the point from which all media responses are coordinated except in cases where specific media plans dictate otherwise.
- 10.9. The MLO shall ensure that the MEC and the Head of Department are briefed on all responses to enquiries.

## **11. Crisis Communication**

- 11.1. Plans and strategies for communicating crisis to the public must be developed as needed. To communicate about crisis effectively, the department must demonstrate interest and concern for all opinions and positions, understand different perspectives, and respect their underlying premises.
- 11.2. Effective crisis management requires open and transparent communication among different or even opposing interests.



The Department must:

- a) foster open dialogue with the public on issues involving crisis and build a climate of trust, credibility and understanding by being forthcoming about facts, evidence and information concerning crisis assessments and decisions taken;
- b) facilitates the interactive exchange of information on crisis and crisis-related factors among interested parties outside the department;
- c) respond to public perceptions and provide factual information to address misconceptions or misunderstandings about crisis; and
- d) integrate environment analysis and communication planning and strategy into crisis assessment and decision-making processes

## **12. Operational Requirements during Crisis Communication**

- 12.1. The crisis communication team should prepare urgent crisis communication approach/tactic for each crisis situation.
- 12.2. Designated spokespersons must be able to visit the crisis scene depending on the nature of crisis. The crisis communication team should pro-actively, depending on the nature of crisis, issue media statements.
- 12.3. The team should ideally be able to call media briefing sessions at the scene. Thorough preparations must be done in advance for such briefing sessions.
- 12.4. The department must recognize that extraordinary and rapid efforts may be required in times of crisis or emergency. Officials must be prepared to adjust priorities and resources accordingly. The necessary plans, partnerships, tools and methods must be in place to allow officials to communicate effectively and efficiently during an emergency or a crisis.
- 12.5. The following shall be regarded as the official and authorized departmental spokespersons during the crisis:
  - a. The MEC as chief spokesperson. Depending on the nature of the crisis, the MEC may be the last person to communicate the official position.
  - b. The Head Of Department
  - c. The MLO of the MEC
  - d. Head of Communications

### **13. Monitoring of Policy**

13.1 Communication Services will oversee the monitoring and evaluation of implementations of this policy. Evaluations will also be conducted by various Branches to assess their effectiveness in meeting the policy requirements.

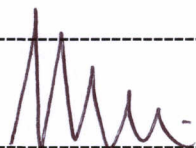
13.2 Evaluation findings will contribute to a formal review of this policy. Evaluations of communications management by the department will also inform the policy review and provide input to the development of best practices in this area.

### **14. Amendment of the Policy**

The policy will be reviewed when necessary.

#### **ENDORSED**

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----



-----  
**HEAD OF DEPARTMENT**

18/02/09

-----  
**DATE**

Note: This policy document is a blue print of the original policy that was approved by MEC Justice Piitso on 06.06.08.