



Policy on Communication and Media


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1. Policy Aim

The aim of this policy is to:

1. Ensure that communication processes across the Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison are well coordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the diverse information needs of the public; safe guarding the visibility, accessibility and accountability of the Department to the public it serves.
2. To ensure that media enquiries are responded to in an effective and timeous manner by either the departmental spokesperson or the media liaison officer in the ministry depending on where the media request was forwarded and which office must respond.

2. Legislative and Policy Framework

- 2.1. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996
- 2.2. Government Communicators Handbook 2014-2017
- 2.3. National Language Policy Framework
- 2.4. The Promotion of Access to Information Act 22 of 2000
- 2.5. The Public Service Act 1994
- 2.6. The White Paper on Transforming the Public Service Delivery 1997
- 2.7. The Public Finance Management Act 2 of 1999
- 2.8. The Disciplinary Code and Procedure for the Public Service, (PSCBC Resolution 2 of 1999)
- 2.9. The Copyright Act 98 of 1978
- 2.10. The Electronic Communication and Transactions Act 25 of 2000
- 2.11. The Electronic Communication Act 36 of 2000
- 2.12. Minimum Information Security Standards (MISS)

3. Policy Scope

This Policy applies to all Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison (DTSL) employees, structures, bodies and organisations that operate within the parameters of the DTSL.

4. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison that:

- 4.1. The Department shall comply with national and provincial directives in its marketing, branding and creation of official documents.
- 4.2. The Department shall respect and effectively use the National and Provincial Code of Arms as prescribed by National Government.
- 4.3. The flow of information shall be ensured within all directorates, the Offices of the Head of Department and the Member of the Executive Council.
- 4.4. The flow of information shall also be managed to and from the media and the department. The information shall be representative and reflective of the transport and safety mandate which the Department is charged with.
- 4.5. The Department shall strive towards the use of (4) official languages (English, Afrikaans Setswana and Xhosa) to reflect diversity in its communication to internal and external stakeholders.
- 4.6. Department shall ensure that all its publications, communication and promotional material depicts the diverse nature of its stakeholders in a fair and inclusive manner.
- 4.7. All information from the Department be coordinated and managed to avoid conflicting statements from reaching the media.
- 4.8. Communication must be clear and have links between all core functions within the Department.
- 4.9. **Communication and Media Management Process shall be as follows:**
 - 4.9.1. **Media Monitoring**
 - 4.9.1.1. Media will be monitored for issues related to the Department to analyse the public environment, concerns and perceptions as these relate to Departmental policies, programmes and services.

4.9.2. Consultative Activities

4.9.2.1. Officials and or directorates embarking on activities such as “imbizos” shall ensure that the promotional material prepared for such events are in line with departmental branding, colours and logos and content and that these represent the mandate of the Department.

4.9.3. **Internet, website and electronic communication:** The departmental website and intranet shall always be active and maintained by the information technology specialists to ensure effective planning and management of electronic services in collaboration with the communication officers of the Department.

4.9.4. Events, public announcements & exhibitions:

4.9.4.1. The Department in conjunction with and guidance provided by the Office of the Premier and upon invitation from other government department and entities, shall participate in exhibitions displaying a unified presence promoting common themes and messages of the National and Provincial Government.

4.9.4.2. The communication unit will form part of the departmental task teams for the signature events and activities of the department, e.g. transport month, safety & security month etc.

4.9.4.3. The Department communicator will also be notified or copied on emails pertaining to any external communication aimed at as public consumption such as vacancies, recruitment, tenders, messaging, alerts and change in policies or regulations to ensure that the departmental communicator can effectively respond and can utilise the information as needed and on the available platforms.

This policy can be read in conjunction with the Departmental Procedure on Marketing, Events and Exhibitions Management to give clarity on processes to be followed such as deadlines and requirements.

- 4.9.5. Publishing, copyright and licensing:** The Department will facilitate access to its publication in whatever medium produced for public dissemination and or limited circulation outside government. The department shall respect copyright and ownership rights and ensure compliance with the copyright legislation.
- 4.9.6. Corporate Identity of the Department:** The communication Unit of the Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison and the Office of the Premier shall be sole custodians of the Corporate Identity of the Department, with Office of the Premier bearing ownership of overall Corporate Identity of the Province. All content, images, artwork, branding and other aspects of the Corporate Identity of the Department will be subjected to input and approval from the communication unit/personnel to ensure compliance with the corporate identity of the Department and the Province.
- 4.9.7. Risk, crisis and emergency communication:** During crises within the departmental premises and or affecting the Department, the communication officer and media liaison officer shall formulate proper and accurate responses to help maintain and restore confidence in the Department. This process shall be done with the help of senior management and line management to provide full cooperation, full briefing on the situation, provision of recommendations as experts in various fields and accurate information. Furthermore, media releases will be approved by the Head of Department and Member of the Executive Council. An open dialogue with the public shall be fostered on issues involving risks to build a climate of trust, credibility and understanding. The factual information shall be used to address misconceptions and misunderstandings.

4.9.8. Newsletter: A newsletter by the communication personnel have been developed to capture newsworthy stories of the Department, although not all but some, to showcase Departmental initiatives, educate and inform both internal and external readers. The contribution will not solely lie on the communication unit but also on Directorates to inform or share information and photos where possible of their highlight programmes, including those unfolding in Districts.

4.9.9. Departmental Social media platforms: These platforms will be overseen by the communication officer and the media liaison officer and any inquiries or comments will be handled with caution and be responded to, where applicable, in the same sensitivity as a media inquiry. General comments will be provided for inquiries and responses and referrals given where possible. No official will be allowed to use the Departmental social media for their own benefit or to put the Department into disrepute in any way. The platform forms part of the Department's image and mandate and should always be noted when uploading information or images. The administration officers or page editors, etc. of the page, shall refrain from entertaining aggressive and unfriendly comments on the web-page to avoid social media disputes.

4.9.10. Media Platforms: A variety of media platforms such as broadcast, print and online will be used as communication channels to promote and communicate messages of the Department. To effectively and accurately communicate, the necessary briefing notes will need to be availed by the Directorates as custodians of information to aid the preparedness of the interviewee speaking on behalf of the Department. All media interactions must be coordinated by the Communication personnel and or with the approval of communications unit to ensure proper coordination, monitoring and curb inconsistent messages from being communicated on media platforms.

Directorates need to actively inform the communications unit on their achievements, challenges and any information or changes that affect our clients and stakeholders to ensure effective and proactive communication takes place. This will allow communications to use the platform to communicate the relevant and important information as required. The Departmental Procedure on Marketing, Events and Exhibitions Management is a document that can be read in conjunction with this policy to give clarity on processes to be followed.

4.9.11. Internal Communication: Mediums such as bulk emailing, internal notice boards and publications will be used to communicate to officials in large numbers as a function of communications personnel. Placement of posters, notices on notice boards (or any surface around work premises) for the consumption of the public are to be approved by Communications Unit or Office of the HOD or Ministry prior to be distributed on the approved platform. Intranet services is an effective way to communicate and avail information exclusively to officials and can be one of the channels being explored to improve internal communications.

Furthermore, the Departmental Procedure on Effective Communication in the Workplace can be read in conjunction with this policy to further elaborate on communication flow and processes in the Department.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. The Departmental Spokesperson (Communication Officer) is responsible for:

5.1.1. Internal and external communication, media relations, media monitoring, participation in departmental and provincial events and the promotion of a positive image of the Department for Transport, Safety & Liaison.

5.2. The Media Liaison Officer (MLO) is responsible for:

5.2.1. All internal and external communication, media relations, media monitoring for the Member of the Executive Council (MEC), inclusive of the administrative and political communications relevant and applicable to the MEC.

5.3. Senior Managers and Line Managers shall provide the requisite support and prompt response to effectively ensure that timeous and correct information is submitted to the Communications Officer.

6. Review and Distribution

6.1. The Manager in the Office of the Head of Department is responsible for this policy and for ensuring that it is reviewed and updated.

6.2. This Policy will be reviewed after 18 months but no later than 3 years of the last publication date. If necessary an updated version will be issued, if not a formal cover letter will be issued to supplement the cover of this Policy (identifying a revised publication date).

6.3. The Senior Manager for Policy & Planning will distribute updated versions to:

- Member of the Executive Council
- Head of Department
- All senior managers who will in turn distribute to their staff as appropriate.