



the denc

Department:
Environment & Nature Conservation
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X6102, Kimberley, 8300, Metlife Towers, T-Floor, Tel: 053 807 7300, Fax: 053 807 7328

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE CONSERVATION

TELEPHONE POLICY
04 December 2013
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT UNIT
VERSION 02

"A PROSPEROUS AND EQUITABLE SOCIETY LIVING IN HARMONY WITH OUR NATURAL RESOURCES"

Table of Contents

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE CONSERVATION.....	1
1. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND.....	3
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.2 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS.....	3
2. POLICY STATEMENT AND APPLICATION SCOPE	3
2.1 POLICY STATEMENT	5
2.2 APPLICATION SCOPE.....	11
3. POLICY FRAMEWORK.....	12
3.1 IDENTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION OF STAKEHOLDERS.....	12
3.2 TIMEFRAMES	12
3.3 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	12
The implementation date for this policy is January 01, 2014	12
3.4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS.....	12
3.5 COMMUNICATION	13
3.6 COMPLIANCE, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E).....	13
3.7 POLICY REVIEW	14
3.8 POLICY IMPACT	14
3.9 INTERIM MEASURES	14
4. ADOPTION OF POLICY	17

1. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Monthly reports of telephones have revealed that telephone calls are the major expense of Department of Environment and Nature Conservation. This is mainly due to high number of calls made, be they "private" or "official". This is notwithstanding the fact that Department is establishing itself and as such populating its organogram with new appointments. The Department will at all times strive to keep telephone expenditure within limits, as well as to reduce low productivity resulting from private calls to a minimum.

This document outlines the procedures to be followed in each of the activities related to the allocation and use of Departmental telephones. Deviations from these procedures need to be approved by the Head of Department. The aim of the policy is to provide help and guidance to the Head of Department and to standardize the use of telephones. This document deals exclusively with the allocation and use of telephones.

DEFINITIONS

Accumulative	: means not carried over to the next month.
Cellphone	: means telephone lines not routed through the Switchboard, all mobile devices
International Calls	: means telephone calls destined to outside the geographic boundaries of South Africa.
Land Line Calls	: means calls dialed from the fixed telephone lines.
Low Productivity	: means low working rate over time
Policy	: means Telephone Usage Policy
Private Calls	: means calls not related to business operations of the Department.
Private Lines	: means telephone lines not linked to the Telephone System (Switchboard).
Telephone	: means both landlines and private lines
Unauthorised Persons	: means people not employees of council

1.2 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The responsibility of managing and controlling a cellular phone is assigned, in terms of sections 38(1) (b), (d) and 38(2) of the Public Finance Management Act, to the Accounting Officer.

Treasury Regulations 10.1.1 and 10.1.2 states:

- 10.1.1 "The Accounting Officer of an institution must take full responsibility and ensure that proper control systems exist for assets and that –
- (a) Preventative mechanisms are in place to eliminate theft, losses, wastage and misuse, AND
 - 3. Stock levels are at an optimum and economical level."



- 10.1.2 "The accounting officer must ensure that processes (whether manual or electronic) and procedures are in place for the effective, efficient, economical and transparent use of the institution's resources."

2 POLICY STATEMENT AND APPLICATION SCOPE

2.1 POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of the policy shall be as follows:

- To formalize the processes and procedures regulating the acquisition, utilization and management of the cellular phone account during use and when an employee is no longer employed by the Department
- To conform to and/ or inform the annual budget process and the prescribed budgeting and reporting responsibilities by means of correctly costing of this cost driver.
- To ensure the effective and efficient use of Departmental telephones;
- To curb the abuse of telephones by employees of the Department;
- To reduce telephone costs;
- To prevent the use of Departmental telephones by unauthorised persons.
- To introduce corrective measures for Officials who fail to observe the guidelines stipulated in the Policy.
- To standardize what may be allowed as being reasonable calls that may be made for private purposes.
- To introduce salary deductions from employees who exceeded their monthly quota of private calls.
- To formalize the processes and procedures regulating the allocation and usage of pool cellular phones within the Department.
- To maximize awareness of official's responsibilities towards the safeguarding of the cellular phone provided to them.

2.1.1. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

Local Personal Calls

Use of State telephones for local personal calls should be kept to a minimum in number and duration.

Long Distance

Employees are not allowed to charge long distance phone calls to the department for calls made of personal nature except noted below. All long distance calls which are to be paid by the state are those made pursuant to the employee conducting official state business.

Allowable Personal Calls

An employee who is in travel status for two or more consecutive days in a week is allowed one personal long distance telephone call for each two days for which reimbursement to the employee may not exceed R60 for in-provincial calls or R100 for out-of-province calls.

Emergency Calls

Employees may use the state network system, state credit card, or may be reimbursed for a personal long distance call(s) if such call(s) is of an emergency nature as determined by

the department. An example may be a call made when an employee calls home to inform someone that the travel period has been extended beyond original plans due to unforeseen reasons.

Cell phones

Because cell phone charges are based on measured use, no personal calls should be made on cellular telephones except in case of emergency as determined by the department. Cell phones should only be used when more economical means of telephoning are not reasonably available.

The authority to approve cell phones for Departmental staff rests with the Accounting Officer. The Accounting Officer will also have the power to withdraw/ deny a cellular phone application if it is in the best interest of the Department.

Secondary Employment

No telephone calls related to secondary employment, except for schedule changes, are to be made during work hours.

Reimbursement

Official phone calls are reimbursable under "Other Expenses". Individual calls over R60.00 (the department can decide on amount) must be identified as to point of origin and destination.

Emergency Situations

Should emergency circumstances arise which necessitates a State employee to make a personal long distance or cellphone call not covered above, the employee should immediately notify his or her supervisor and make arrangements to reimburse the State.

2.1.2 PROVISION OF TELEPHONE SERVICE

Landlines

- i) It shall be the responsibility of the Manager for office services to provide all Departmental offices or a combination of Departmental offices with a satisfactory and reliable telephone service;
- ii) The Department may centralize its telephone operating system and install one or more switchboards through which all outgoing and incoming calls shall be routed;
- iii) The Departmental switchboard[s] shall be housed in a safe and secure environment and the switchboard instrument as well as the office in which the switchboard is housed shall be provided with a lockable device or devices, the keys of which shall be in the possession of the Switchboard Operator[s] appointed by the Department;

- iv) It shall be the responsibility of the Switchboard Operator[s] to ensure that no unauthorized person obtains access to the switchboard[s] of the Department;

Cell Phones

- i) The MEC and/or the HOD shall be provided with cellphones over and above extension lines.
- ii) only officials whose work provides/requires that they may have cellphones
- iii) All other employees are prohibited the benefit of having cellphones, except those referred to in clause (ii) of this Policy.
- iv) Department policy is that a cellular phone is regarded as a tool which will assist staff in performing the duties for which they have been appointed and not a status symbol or fringe benefit.
- v) Cellular phones are provided to qualifying employees who are required to avail themselves for official duties at all times (24 hours a day). Costs of the rental of the cellular phone contract, as well as all related calls are paid by the Department up to a specified limit. Therefore:
 - a. Employees must demonstrate that as a result of the nature of their duties they are required to make use of cellular phones to function effective and efficiently especially after hours or on week-ends;
 - b. Staff members who are away from their place of work and need to be contacted by the office on a regular basis;
 - c. Certain events, depending, on the nature of the work performed at the relevant Department , which require close co-ordination and contact between the office and the staff member;
 - d. The acquisition of the cellular phone must be absolutely essential and in the interests of the Department that the requirements cannot be satisfied through a less costly medium;
- vi) Exceptional cases, which do not meet the above criteria, are to be approved by the Head of the Department. If an employee should require the use of a cellular phone, but does not qualify for such a facility (as per procedures for the allocation of cellular telephones), the Department may allocate a pool cellular phone to the employee for a period of time as deemed necessary. The employee is to return the telephone to the Department once the need no longer exists.
- vii) Cellular telephones are provided to qualifying employees on contracts with predetermined service providers. A monthly limit is also granted (**Annexure B**). This limit is not to be exceeded. The Service Provider is expected to disallow any calls over the specified limit by installing the stop limit facility. The official shall be allowed to receive calls without making any until the beginning of the new month.
- viii) The employee bears the responsibility for the safeguarding of the cell phone while it is in his/her possession. Measures should be adopted to ensure that the cell phone is free from damage and neglect, and that it is not stolen. All cellular



phones which are provided to officials by the Department are to be insured by the Department.

2.1.3. TELEPHONE USAGE CONTROL MEASURES

The Manager for Office Services will determine the conditions relating to the usage of landline telephones by all staff, whilst the office of the Chief Financial Officer will determine the conditions relating to the usage of cellphones.

Landlines

Heads of Departments are allowed to come up with other control measures which are in line with the Policy.

- i) The Head of Department shall determine which officials may have cellphones for use in connection with the performance of their official duties;
- ii) Except in the case of employees provided with cellphones, all outgoing telephone calls shall be directed through the switchboard[s] of the Department;
- iii) It shall be the duty of the person making the call, before dialing the number required to indicate whether the call is official or private in nature;
- iv) Where an employee has a cellphone/ private line, that employee shall be obliged to maintain the telephone log book and submit it to the respective authority at the end of the month;
- v) The Department shall provide an electronic device for the monitoring of all outgoing telephone calls;
- vi) At the end of each month, the Switchboard Operator shall provide the Finance Department with a complete list of Officials who have made private telephone calls and cost thereof during the month in question, the destination of such call and its duration.
- vii) The Finance Department shall, on the basis of information supplied in respect of private calls made by an Official provide such Official with a detailed statement of the private calls made and the total cost thereof, including VAT (refer to **Annexure A**).
- viii) The Finance Department shall supply the Human Resources Department with the list of deductions required for the month in question in respect of private calls made by the Officials if they exceed the R60-00 per month limit.
- ix) Officials shall only be entitled to make international calls with the specific approval of the Head of Department.
- x) No Official shall make a call on behalf of or allow any unauthorized person to make a private telephone call from either a private telephone line or from the switchboard of the Department.

Cellphones

- i) Officials must be in possession of their cellular phones at all times (not left unattended on desks or in offices);
- ii) Cellular phones must be carried in such a way that it is not visible while appearing in public;
- iii) The use of cellular phones in open areas (i.e. in the streets and in public places) should be avoided at all costs. Voicemail facilities should be used instead;

- iv) Officials who are provided with cellular phones by the Department must ensure that these are properly locked away and stored in a safe place;
- v) When a cellular phone is stored in a briefcase, handbag, etc. these are to be under the personal control of the employee responsible for the items;
- vi) Cellular phones should not be stored in a visible place in a motor vehicle when an employee is travelling. Cellular phones should not be left in the cradles of the hands free kits when stopping at traffic lights or at any other traffic signs;
- vii) All cellular phones, which have been lost, should be reported to the South African Police Service and the Department's Supply Chain Management section within 24 hours.

Indemnity on cellphone usage

- i) Car kit installation is optional and for the employees own account
- ii) The Department will not be held liable for any damages and/or injuries caused by accidents or traffic fines which are directly or indirectly the result of the use of the cellular phone while traveling in a motor vehicle;
- iii) The Department will not be liable for unlawful use of the phone, including infringement of the law resulting from failure to use the hands free apparatus while driving.

2.1.4. BARRING OF TELEPHONES

The Head of department shall have discretion to determine which Officials with cellphones/ private lines shall be allowed to make international, national, provincial and local calls only. Therefore, telephones lines shall be suitably barred on the basis of this classification, if an official reaches the limit to his monthly allocation the HOD will at their discretion review an extension to the official's monthly allocation. (Refer to **Annexure B**).

2.1.5. AVAILABILITY OF THIS POLICY

Every Official upon being appointed in the service of the Department shall be supplied with a copy of this Policy and shall acknowledge receipt thereof by signing a duplicate copy thereof. The said duplicate copy shall be filed on the personal file of the Official.

2.1.6. CONSEQUENCE OF NON-COMPLIANCE

Failure to comply with the policy will be viewed as a serious disciplinary transgression and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

The Accounting Officer will also have the power to withdraw such a facility if it is in the best interest of the Department to do so, or if the following circumstances have been identified:

- i) If an official is negligent;
- ii) If the cellular phone is misused (example, too many private calls);
- iii) If it is not a necessity according to the job description.

Documents

The following documentation pertains to the use of cellular phones:

- i) Contract between service provider and Department ;
- ii) Application form;

2.1.7. CONTROL PROCEDURES

Every Line Manager must personally examine telecommunication accounts relating to lines or extensions allocated to employees under his/her supervision. He or she shall make such relevant comments for attention or information of the relevant person, his or her supervisor, or any other official in the department, which shall where necessary be used as evidence should a disciplinary hearing or such appropriate actions be necessary to be taken due to persistent abuse by an employee.

Officials Leaving Department or Contract Expires

- i) All cellular phones and 3 G cards must be returned to the Supply Chain Management Section at the expiry of the service contract or if the official leaves the employ of the Department
- ii) Head of Supply Chain Management must ensure that cellular phones and 3 G cards of officials, who terminate their services with the Department are returned before leaving;
- iii) On expiry of the cellular phone contract, the relevant section(mentioned above) may renew the contract and obtain a free replacement cellular telephone;
- iv) On expiry of the cellular phone or 3 G card contract, the user should return the cellular phone or 3G card to the Department. It should be disposed of in accordance with the normal policy on the disposal of assets or added to the pool of phones at the Department;
- v) It is the duty of every official to hand in the cellular phone at the relevant unit when leaving the Department.

2.1.8. TELEPHONE ACCOUNTS

- i) There should be a detailed account for each individual user of cellular telephones summarized into one account, within the Department;
- ii) This account should be paid in total to the supplier and copies of the individual accounts of the users should be retained for reference purposes;
- iii) The Human Resources Department will make payroll deductions from employees' salaries in respect of private calls made if the maximum monthly limit of R60.00 is exceeded. Each staff member shall sign an understanding that if they make private calls that exceed the R60-00 limit, the cost thereof shall be deducted from salaries.
- iv) The maximum limit will be reviewed by the Head of Department
The monthly limit shall not be accumulative.

2.1.9. PROTECTIVE MEASURES

- i) Employees will be provided with Personal Identification numbers (PIN).
- ii) Officials with cellphones are also required to enter PIN codes

- iii) These numbers will provide security to telephone users, especially those who are working in an open plan office arrangement/work stations as this will help in avoiding the use of telephones by employees at the expense of the fellow employees.
- iv) Individual employees will be provided with individual telephone lines.

2.2 APPLICATION SCOPE

This policy will apply to all officials of the Department of Environment and Nature Conservation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping loops and strokes, located in the bottom right corner of the page.

3. POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.1 IDENTIFICATION AND CONSULTATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

This policy document was distributed to staff members within the department and their feedback and inputs are included where changes were suggested and motivated. Information sessions were also held as part of the consultation process. The recognized Labour Unions are not excluded in the process as they do have shop stewards within the department, and them being part of the departmental staff, thus had the opportunity to participate in the process.

3.2 TIMEFRAMES

The policy development unit held a meeting with the Financial Management unit on April 07, 2011 to discuss some amendments and these were incorporated to this policy. On June 17, 2011 the policy development unit redrafted the policy to incorporate all the recommendations and inputs. On June 20, 2011 the unit further realigned and incorporated the benchmark policies with the telephone policy.

3.3 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that this policy is carefully followed within the department. All managers should ensure that all employees are made aware of the obligation to familiarize themselves with and follow this policy.

An implementation plan will be drafted which will outline how and when this policy will be implemented. The plan will be drafted two months after the implementation date of this policy. In order to ensure adequate implementation of this policy the Financial Management unit will compile an infrastructure investment (in terms of human capital) and policy management plan. The plan will be updated on an annual basis and will contain details on future guidelines for this policy. The financial implications if any will be indicated on the plan in order to ensure that funds are available or availed.

The implementation date for this policy is January 01, 2014

3.4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This policy will be funded by the different budget allocations of the respective directorates with the cooperation of the Budget Manager (Financial Management).

Ownership and Possession of Cellphones and 3 G card

- a) Cellular phones allocated to employees of the Department who qualify for this benefit, remain the property of the State. The employees are responsible for the safekeeping of these cellular phones and ensuring that they function effectively. The onus is on the employee to ensure that the cellular phone is protected against theft and damage.
- b) The cellular phone provided to the employee forms part of the asset pool of the Department
- c) Officials who are allocated with cellular phones acknowledge that the instrument is a work tool and that they will therefore be accessible on the cellular phone (directly or

through voice mail) during working hours and, by agreement, after hours in the case of officials whose responsibilities demand such accessibility.

- d) If the insurance reimbursement was to be declined due to negligence by the official, the official shall be held responsible.

3.5 COMMUNICATION

This policy should be communicated through the respective directorates. However, the most important unit to contact would be the Financial Management Directorate. This policy will be communicated to the administrators of the Office of the premier (Policy and Planning) website.

3.6 COMPLIANCE, MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

All units are required to sign a memo which contains the signature of the:

- Compiler
- Supervisor (for recommendation)
- The Budget Manager (to verify the availability of funds)
- Head of Department (approval for purchase)

Approval of Cellular Phone and 3G Cards

The authority to approve cell phones for Departmental staff rests with the Accounting Officer. The Accounting Officer will also have the power to withdraw/ deny a cellular phone application if it is in the best interest of the Department.

Application Procedure

When an employee requests a cellular telephone/3G, the following information should be provided:

- i) Reasons for the request of a cellular phone or 3G card
- ii) Which other means of communication were considered;
- iii) Is it necessary that the user at all times be available;
- iv) Is the cellular network in operation within the area of use of the cellular phone;
- v) What are the financial implications of the cellular phone or 3G cards, that is, which tariff structure and which services are contemplated?
- vi) All applications must be on an official application form.
 - a) The application form must be recommended by a Director and approved by the Head of Department.
 - b) The Programme Manager is entrusted with the responsibility to ensure that funds are available before making a recommendation.

Guidelines on Purchase of Cellular phones and 3G Cards

- i) The equipment must comply with the requirements of the Global System Mobile Communications (GSM) cellular network;



- ii) The equipment must be compatible for International roaming.
- iii) The service must be obtained from firms that are formally associated with the network licensees;
- iv) The Department will, for the acquisition of cellular telephones, adhere strictly to the Supply Chain Management/Asset Policy;
- v) Cellular phones are to be purchased on contract, from approved service providers;
- vi) The service provider will be identified by the Supply Chain Management section and a two year contract will be entered into between the Department and the service provider;
- vii) All cellular phones are to be acquired directly by the State and belong to the State and not to the official. Government officials are not to communicate with the service provider directly, any queries are to be channeled through the Supply Chain Management Head;
- viii) The official is to notify the administrative representative in the Department with the relevant details (contract number, cellular phone number etc) within seven working days after the phone has been obtained;

3.7 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed when the need arises or in case of the occurrence of extenuating circumstances (political mitigation, or pronouncement by legislation and/or regulations). The contact person for this policy will be required to submit all relevant information pertaining to this policy in conjunction with a signed memo with all amendments (addition or omission) during the third quarter annually.

The exception, the Policy development unit will be conducting all extenuating reviews throughout the year, therefore it is paramount that any new information received be submitted to this unit, in order to coordinate the review process of this policy.

3.8 POLICY IMPACT

The desire of this policy is to inform management and staff of the Department of Environment and Nature Conservation regarding the usage of state telephones. This document aspires to outlines the procedures to be followed in handling the issuance and monitoring of state telephones in order to avoid corrupt practices/ mismanagement of the Departments finances.

3.9 INTERIM MEASURES

This policy will amend and re-enforce some sections of the previous policy which was adopted by the department.

RECORD OF PRIVATE TELEPHONE/CELLULAR CALLS

MONTH OF 20

Name of User:..... Department:.....

DATE	NUMBER DIALED	PLACE	TIME	SIGNATURE

Signature of User :

Month :

(a) I certify that official calls made as indicated above was essential YES/ NO

(b) I am satisfied that the duration of each call was reasonable YES/ NO

REMARKS:

.....

.....

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR:

NAME OF SUPERVISOR :

DATE :

1. Limits for Usage of telephones and 3G cards

All employees of the Department, who qualify for a telephone, cellphone and/or 3G cards, have a monthly limit which, is to be adhered to.

This limit will be paid for by the Department. The different categories of staff, which qualify for telephones, are allocated different allowances according to their levels within the Department. For cellphones, this limit covers the rental, as well as the cost of the calls. This limit will be reviewed annually.

If an employee exhausts his/her limit during the month the Head of Department has the powers to instruct the financial management section to investigate if there was any misuse.

Monthly Limits for Cellular Telephone usage for the Department.

The following limits are set for officials for usage of cellphones. The amounts below

Position	Monthly Limit
MEC	No limit
Head of Department	No limit
Chief Director/ Director	R 1000-00
Deputy Director	R 800-00
Assistant Director	R 500-00.
Senior Administration Officer	R 400-00.
Administration Officer	R 300-00

Monthly limits for landlines of all Employees as set by the Head of Department

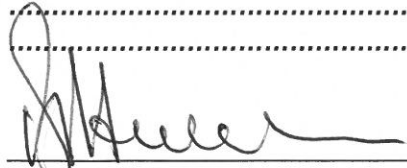
Position	Monthly Limit
MEC	No limit
Head of Department	No limit
Chief Director/ Director	R500
Deputy Director	R400
Assistant Director	R300
Senior Administration Officer	R300
Administration Officer	R300
Interns and Learners	R100
Authorised Staff (e.g.SCM staff)	R500

4. ADOPTION OF POLICY

Approved/ ~~Not Approved~~

Comments:

.....
.....
.....



D VAN HEERDEN
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

2013/204
DATE



