

CONTENTS

Introduction	02
The SABC's Mandate	03
The SABC's policy on Programming	09
The SABC's policy on News, Current Affairs and Information	19
The SABC's policy on Language	26
The SABC's policy on Universal Service and Access	35
The SABC's policy on Local Content	41
The SABC's policy on Religious Programming	45
The SABC's policy on Educational Broadcasting	48

The SABC is required, in terms of Section 6 of the Broadcasting Act (as amended), to develop policies that will guide it in the delivery of its public broadcasting mandate. The draft policies in this document relate to all SABC editorial content, and to services for both national and international audiences. These draft policies constitute a discussion paper, and are for public comment and input. The document is also available on the SABC's web site, www.sabc.co.za.

All comments should reach the SABC by 13 June 2003.
Comments can be sent to:

SABC Policies, Private Bag X1, Auckland Park 2006
Fax: (011) 714-2253
E-mail: policies@sabc.co.za



INTRODUCTION

The SABC is required, in terms of Section 6 of the Broadcasting Act (as amended), to develop policies that are intended to ensure compliance with the Authority's Code of Conduct, the Corporation's licence conditions, and the provisions of the Act. These policies — including a news editorial policy, and policies on programming, local content, education, universal service and access, language, and religion — are to be submitted to the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) no later than three months after the date of the SABC's conversion.

This document is a compilation of the above policies that the SABC requires to guide it in discharging its public broadcasting mandate.

These policies represent how the Board gives shape to and interprets the SABC's public broadcasting mandate, and provide a framework for editorial staff within which to take decisions.

A number of assumptions underpin the policies. One is that the SABC's current funding model is maintained or, if altered, is done so in a manner that improves the capacity of the Corporation to deliver on its mandate. Another assumption is that the current legislative, policy and regulatory regime will remain relatively stable and that it is unlikely that any additional mandate requirements, outside those interpreted and outlined in this document, will be set for the SABC. Changes in these assumptions may necessitate amendment of these policies.

The policies relate to all the SABC's content, and to services for both national and international audiences. They apply to all the services, irrespective of whether they are carried on radio or television, online, by short message service (SMS) or mobile phone; produced by an SABC department or an independent company. They generally apply to both the SABC's public and commercial services. Where they have particular relevance to either division, this is stated.

The policies are intended to help the editorial staff negotiate difficult editorial issues and decisions so that distinctive and compelling — and sometimes controversial — programmes can be made, while maintaining the highest ethical and editorial standards. Every member of the editorial staff, in the regions, at head office and overseas, is therefore required to study, understand and observe these policies.

Whereas certain policies apply to specific programme areas, all the policies should be read together with Chapter 2: The SABC's Mandate and Chapter 3: Programming Policy. All the informational and actuality programming, whether it is produced by SABC News or not, should conform to the News, Current Affairs and Information Programming Policy in Chapter 4.

THE SABC'S MANDATE

POWERS, FUNCTIONS, RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

The SABC's mandate as a public broadcaster comes from the Charter, which establishes the corporation and defines its objectives.

The Charter is laid down in Section 6 of the Broadcasting Act and requires the SABC to encourage the development of South African expression by providing, in the official languages, a wide range of programming that:

- Reflects South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity
- Displays South African talent in educational and entertaining programmes
- Offers a plurality of views and a variety of news, information and analysis from a South African point of view
- Advances the national and public interest.

The SABC's powers and functions, as well as its rights and obligations, are derived from a number of sources: legislation, the Charter, the licence conditions of each SABC station and channel, and regulations issued by ICASA from time to time, including the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters.

South Africa's broadcasting legislation provides for a three-tier licensing structure for broadcasting services: public, commercial and community. The SABC is South Africa's only public broadcaster, and consists of two separate divisions controlled by the Board: a public service division and a commercial service division, within which the SABC runs a number of public and commercial radio stations and television channels. Each has a set of licence conditions that imposes specific obligations, including quotas for local content, and requirements for geographical coverage and language services. These are laid down by ICASA, which is responsible for monitoring compliance with the licence conditions and with the objectives of the Charter.

Like all the broadcasters, the SABC is required to adhere to a Code of Conduct for Broadcasters that is approved by ICASA. As a member of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the SABC is subject to the rules of the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA), which ensures that broadcasters adhere to certain minimum standards with regard to programme content.


The SABC's functions and duties are based on a policy for public broadcasting that was first developed in the Independent Broadcasting Authority's Triple Inquiry Report published in 1995. The report, which was the outcome of South Africa's first public discussion on transformation of the SABC from State to public broadcaster, highlights the following aspects of the SABC's public broadcasting role:

- Universality — the need to provide national coverage
- Accessibility — delivery of programmes that audiences find interesting, relevant and enjoyable, in languages of their choice
- National and provincial identity — promotion of a national culture and sense of identity that reflect our nation's common experience
- Diversity and choice — delivery of a wide range of programmes that meet the needs of the public at large
- Quality — in every service, through innovative programming
- Independence — freedom from influence by vested interests, political or financial
- Accountability and efficiency — the need to operate effectively and give value in what it delivers.

The SABC's core role identified in the Triple Inquiry Report is to strengthen South Africa's democracy. The report says:

"For South Africa's new democracy to take root and flourish, people will need the information to participate in the processes and decisions that affect their daily lives... For the mass of the





population, the only way this will be achieved is through the mobilisation of the public broadcasting services... It is only through a massive programme of public provision that the majority of South Africans will gain access to the broad range of programming and information necessary for effective citizenship".

Whereas the Triple Inquiry Report prepared the ground for the SABC's transition, technological and economic developments in the broadcasting market led to the South African government reviewing broadcasting policy in 1998. This took the form of a Green Paper/White Paper process. The White Paper concluded that the SABC needed a statutory Charter containing many of the features that had been identified in the Triple Inquiry Report, including:

- To be comprehensive and to offer services to the whole country
- To be innovative and to offer programming of a high standard
- To enrich South Africa's cultural heritage through support for the Arts
- To contribute to a sense of national identity
- To inform, educate and entertain
- To reflect South Africa's cultural diversity in the framework of national unity
- To report news and current affairs fairly and impartially.

The Broadcasting Act captured these principles and enshrined them in the Charter establishing the Corporation. A central tenet of the Charter is that the SABC enjoys freedom of expression and journalistic, creative and programming independence. The SABC Board, which is appointed by the President on the advice of the National Assembly, controls the affairs of the SABC and is explicitly mandated to protect the above freedom and independence.

CORE EDITORIAL VALUES OF THE SABC

Public broadcasters world wide share many features relating to independence, accountability and diversity. However, the SABC's context has unique facets that also determine its positioning. These relate to South Africa's challenges as a young democracy and a society in transition. The challenges are captured neatly in the preamble to the Constitution, which sets out the objectives of the South African constitution as:

- To heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights
- To lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by the law
- To improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person
- To build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations

Those national objectives therefore underpin the values and principles that define the SABC's role as a public broadcaster: to play a part in healing divisions of the past; to promote respect for democratic values and human rights; to supply information that allows citizens to exercise their rights, and to reflect the rich diversity of a united South Africa.

The values articulated in the Constitution — including national development, unity, diversity, non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy and human dignity — represent those things that are commonly held by South Africans to be important. They bridge political, class, racial and gender divides, and although we are still at the start of our project of national development, those are what anchor us as a nation. For the public broadcaster, then, they must form the foundations of our editorial policies.

Among the core editorial values for the SABC are these:

Equality

The SABC provides programmes for everyone, in all the official languages, and promotes universal access to its services.

Editorial Independence

The SABC is governed by the Charter of the Corporation, which enshrines the journalistic, creative and programming independence of the staff of the corporation, and the constitutionally protected freedom of expression.

Nation Building

The SABC celebrates South Africa's national identity and culture, and provides its citizens with the information they need to participate in building our democracy.

Diversity

The SABC reflects South Africa's diverse languages, cultures, provinces and people in its programmes.

Human Dignity

The SABC respects the inherent dignity of all South Africans, reflects them in all their diversity, and does not use language or images that convey stereotypical or prejudiced notions of South Africa's races, cultures and sexes.

Accountability

In discharging their editorial responsibilities, SABC management and staff are accountable to the SABC Board, which is charged with ensuring that the corporation complies with the Charter.

Transparency

The SABC ensures that the principles of honesty, openness and transparency govern every aspect of its relationships with shareholder, stakeholders, suppliers and the public.

EDITORIAL CODE OF THE SABC

The values give rise to an Editorial Code that underpins all the programming. This Code was developed by the SABC Board in 1993, and has now been revised to incorporate recent developments and changes in the law. The Code affirms commitment to the principle of editorial independence as it relates to SABC programmes.

- We report, contextualise, and present news and current affairs honestly by striving to disclose all the essential facts and by not suppressing relevant, available facts, or distorting by wrong or improper emphasis.
- We understand that if South Africans are to meet the challenges of building a nation and a strong democracy, they must have access to relevant, reliable, and timely information of the best quality. In covering newsworthy events, we aim to give them what they need in order to make informed decisions about their lives.
- We commission, produce and broadcast programmes in a variety of genres and formats, and strive to ensure that the SABC's core values are upheld in the commissioning, acquisition and production of programmes.
- We are aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media, and avoid promoting discrimination through the SABC's programmes on the grounds of gender, race, language, culture, political persuasion, class, sexual orientation, religious belief, marital status, or disability.
- We do not allow advertising, commercial, political or personal considerations to influence our editorial decisions. The SABC is expected to provide information and as part of this duty should evaluate, analyse and critically appraise government policies and programmes. The SABC is not the mouthpiece of the government of the day, nor should it broadcast its opinion of government policies, unless they relate directly to broadcasting matters.
- We respect individuals' legitimate right to privacy, and should not do anything that entails intrusion into private grief and distress, unless it is justified by overriding considerations of public interest.
- We are circumspect and sensitive in the presentation of brutality, violence, atrocities and personal grief.
- We seek balance by presenting relevant views on matters of importance, as far as possible. This may not always be achieved in a single programme or news bulletin, but should be done within a reasonable time.

- We are guided by news merit and judgement in reaching editorial decisions. Fairness does not require editorial staff to be unquestioning, or the SABC to give every side of an issue the same amount of time.
- In serving the public's right to know, we are enterprising in perceiving, pursuing and presenting issues that affect society and individuals.
- We are free from obligation to any interest group, and committed to the public's right to know the truth.
- We do not accept gifts, favours, free travel, special treatment or privileges that could compromise our integrity, and any such offer is to be disclosed.
- We identify ourselves and our employer before obtaining any information for broadcasting. As a general rule, journalism should be conducted openly. Covert methods may be used only with due regard to their legality, to considerations such as fairness and invasion of privacy, and to whether the information being sought is so significant that it warrants public disclosure but cannot be obtained by other means.
- We resolutely uphold the principle of journalistic freedom and see the protection of a journalist's sources as an important part of this principle. If the protection of a source were to become a legal matter, the SABC would not advise its employees to refuse to obey a court order, but would make its legal counsel available for advice and to present legal argument in court to protect the source.
- We do our utmost to make a timely correction of any information broadcast that is found to be prejudicially inaccurate.
- We foster open dialogue with our viewers and listeners, as we are accountable to the public for our reports.
- We aim to tell stories from a South African point of view and deal with issues that are important to South Africans. This includes local, African and global issues. We endeavour to contextualise for South Africans their life as global citizens, and to recount the story of South Africa in all its variety and complexity.
- We support South African culture and develop programmes that are identifiably South African and contribute to a sense of national identity; to a sense of shared experience and the goal of nation building.
- We provide a programme mix that suits a variety of tastes and reflects the multifarious make-up of South Africa. This extends to languages, cultures and geographical regions.

EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND UPWARD REFERRAL

For purposes of the Editorial Code and of all the policies that flow from it, it is understood that the authority for editorial decisions is vested in the editorial staff. Aside from the process of upward referral which is outlined in this section, editorial staff are required to ask for advice from the Office of the Chief Legal Advisor on any matter that may have legal implications for the SABC. (In addition, Legal guidelines for editorial staff are available from the Legal Department). However, the final decision whether to broadcast, and in what form, lies with the editorial staff, not their legal advisors. The aim is to safeguard the editorial process and maintain clear responsibility for the decision to broadcast.

The SABC as a corporation, and thereby the CEO as the Editor in Chief, exerts editorial authority and control over, and bears responsibility for the content of, all the programmes produced, commissioned and broadcast by the SABC. All the editorial staff in News and Programming abide by the Editorial Code that commits them to the highest standards of objectivity, accuracy, fairness, impartiality and balance. The onus is on each of them to ensure that the provisions of broadcasting and other legislation are complied with, the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters and regulations issued by ICASA are adhered to, and the policies of the corporation are observed. It is the responsibility of the senior news and programming executives to establish the necessary

systems and processes to achieve compliance with the Editorial Code and Editorial Policies. They are the Managing Director: News, the Heads of Radio News, TV News and SABC Africa, the Managing Director: PBS, the Managing Director: PCBS, the TV channel Heads and the radio station managers.

Editorial staff are expected to use their judgement regarding the parameters of the Code and the editorial policies. If they are unsure of anything, or a problem arises, they should consult the next most senior person in the editorial chain of responsibility. This is upward referral. It is an empowering approach that exists in other public broadcasters around the world. It presumes editorial staff are familiar with the functions, duties and values of the public broadcaster and are in the best position to make editorial decisions. The practice of upward referral gives journalists and other programming staff an ideal mechanism for consultation, first with peers and then with senior management, before taking a decision that could have consequences for the corporation. The SABC Board is finally responsible for evaluating the compliance of staff and management with editorial policies.

For working journalists and other programming staff the single fact of having a daily or, for some media, an hourly deadline means that time is of the essence and snap judgements are the order of the day. These decisions are taken in the heat of the moment, which could be in a highly emotionally charged situation such as a public demonstration, or in the quiet of an office during a daily diary meeting. An opportunity missed because of inflexible upward referral procedures could mean a rival's scooping a news story. However, mistakes that could be expensive for the SABC in terms of legal costs and claims for damages, or loss of credibility, require strict adherence to clear rules for upward referral — for protection of both the corporation and the professional integrity of those concerned. The credibility of the corporation and that of its news and programming staff are interdependent.

It is difficult to say what constitutes an extraordinary event or situation. As a general rule, when editorial staff are not sure whether a decision is likely to have a negative effect or wider implications, as a matter of course they should refer it to their immediate senior. That person in turn would refer it further, to the appropriate person or decision-making forum. In addition, even when specific editorial guidance is not being sought, programmes or news items that are controversial or likely to have an extraordinary impact on the corporation or in the community should be reported in advance to the senior news and programming executives (as listed above), who in turn may decide to notify top management.

MANDATORY REFERRAL — GROUP EXECUTIVE AND BOARD

As a rule, and in accordance with the SABC's policies on Authority and Delegation, any matter that could have major financial, image, or public response implications is to be referred to, and approved by, Group Executive. This makes it mandatory to refer any extraordinary matter, whether it involves issues of overspending or the public standing of the corporation, for approval by Group Executive and/or the Board before proceeding on any course of action that could bind the corporation legally, or expose it to legal or financial claim.

MANDATORY REFERRAL — MD OF NEWS & CURRENT AFFAIRS, HEAD OF RADIO NEWS AND HEAD OF TV NEWS

As a rule, and as a matter of policy to protect the public interest, the national interest, the interests of the SABC and its staff, as well as the individual rights and interests of editorial staff and journalistic sources, it is understood that the authority for editorial decisions is vested in the editorial staff. To ensure adequate protection of these numerous — and sometimes competing — interests, every news organisation and broadcasting operation establishes a referral system as part of the editorial process.

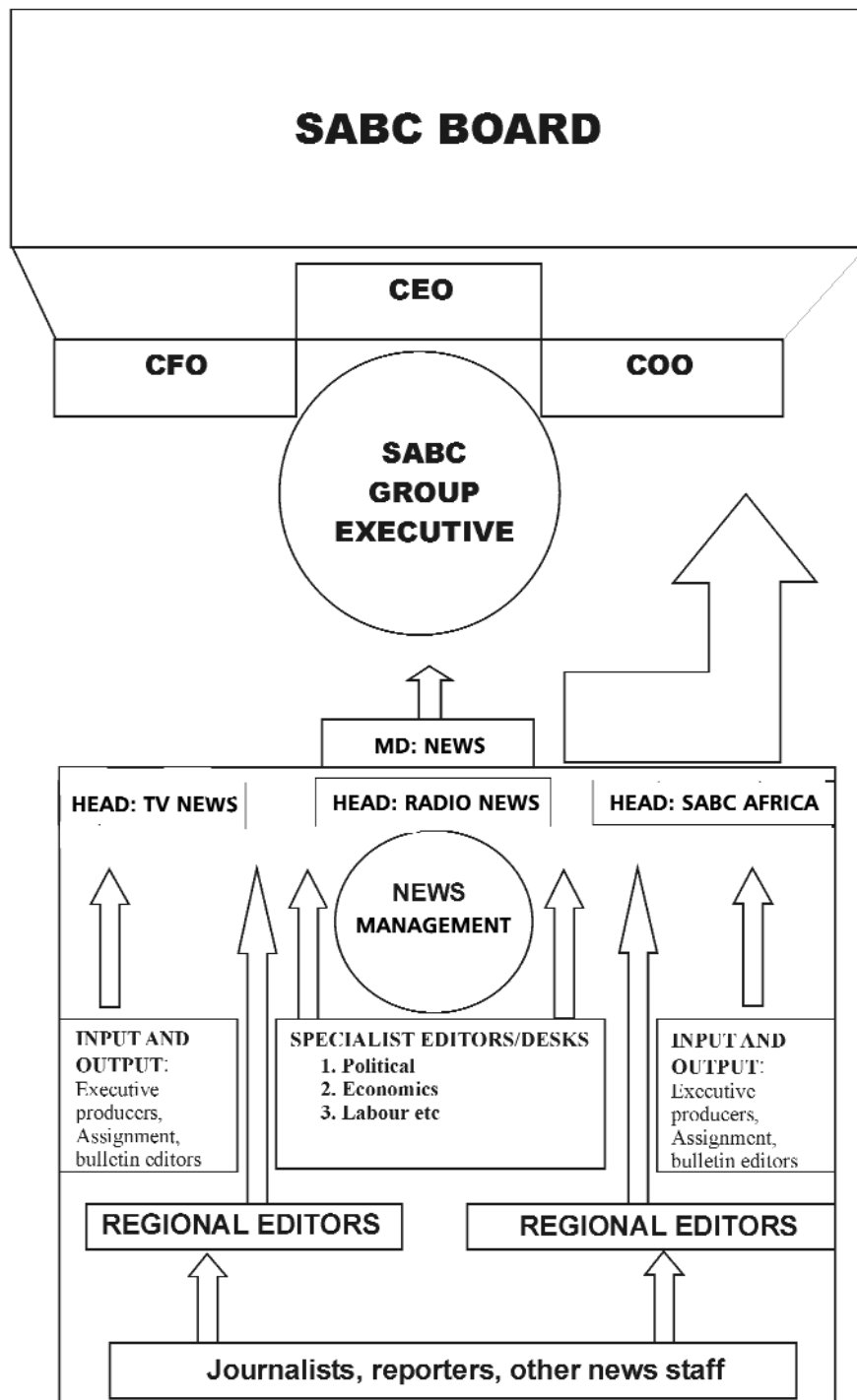
If anyone on the news staff does not refer an issue upwards, that person will be held responsible for the editorial decision taken. The following matters are to be referred to the Head of either Radio or TV News or SABC Africa, or discussed in advance at daily planning and editorial meetings:

- Any instance in which it becomes necessary and is deemed to be in the public interest to gather information to which the public normally does not have access.

- Interviews with criminals and people wanted by police.
- Any proposal to grant anonymity to anyone trying to evade the law.
- Payment for information.
- Broadcasting of any recording made originally for other legal purposes, such as a recording of the proceedings at a meeting.
- Disclosure of the details of a serious crime that were obtained surreptitiously or unofficially.
- Requests from external parties to view, listen to, or obtain untransmitted recorded material.
- Commissioning of opinion polls.

The daily practice of upward referral has evolved over time and has not been documented, or written into a manual or style guide. This practice will continue to develop, and as editorial policies are updated constantly to reflect the prevailing social values and international best practice, it will be refined further.

The following flow chart for upward referral is a general guide that departments and divisions should adapt to their circumstances.





THE SABC'S APPROACH TO SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC ON RADIO

The following principles underpin the SABC's support for South African music:

- ICASA makes a distinction between the level of local content expected by public service stations as opposed to commercial stations, and has set a higher quota for public service stations. The SABC concurs that its public service stations should lead the way in supporting South African music.
- With 19 radio stations broadcasting in all the official languages, and in a range of formats, SABC radio stations are uniquely placed to showcase the wide range of musical expression in South Africa. The SABC is committed to the effective use of its stations to explore and celebrate the diversity of South African music.
- Whereas the allocation of air time to South African music will always be the primary means of supporting local music, the SABC believes there are a number of other equally effective interventions that SABC radio stations are able to make in support of local music. SABC radio publicises local musicians through interviews, reviews and promotions. The stations, both public service and commercial, also stage live events every year in partnership with South African acts.
- One of the greatest challenges facing SABC radio stations is the provision of sufficient good quality local material in all music formats. This continues to have a direct effect on stations' ability to meet their quotas. Towards addressing this concern, the SABC works with relevant forums such as the South African Music Forum convened by ICASA. The SABC hopes that through this work the broadcasting and music industries can jointly develop strategies to address the issues of supply in South African music.
- The SABC strives to support the development of music on the African continent, and will, where possible, showcase such music.

REVIEW

This policy is reviewed by the SABC Board every five years.

⁷ICASA has proposed that all local content definitions be removed from the Act and be published in Regulations

⁸ICASA has proposed an amendment to this definition to also exclude a person controlled by a controlling shareholder of a broadcasting licensee.

⁹ICASA South African Television Content Regulations, 15 February 2002

PROGRAMMING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The SABC is accountable to the South African public for providing relevant and diverse broadcasting services of excellent quality. In this we are guided by:

- the Charter
- the SABC's Core Editorial Values
- the Editorial Code of the SABC
- our obligation to comply with the industry standard, the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, which is administered by the BCCSA.

Formulating a policy on programming is therefore an intricate process in which we are the primary, but not the only, participants.

To meet audience expectations is our priority. In this we also create an environment that respects the freedom of expression provisions of our Constitution, and encourages our programme makers to explore, to innovate and to take risks in accommodating programmes that fulfil the SABC's public mandate.

In 1995, the SABC Board approved Guidelines on Programme Content that were applicable largely to television but had some relevance to radio. What follows seeks to update that document. It is applicable to all the SABC services, public service and commercial.

There is a need for consistency of approach across the spectrum of SABC programmes, and this policy has been developed to answer that need. It offers a frame of reference for those who are faced with difficult programming decisions and as a guide to programme commissioning, planning, production, scheduling and transmission.

THE SABC'S APPROACH TO PROGRAMMING

The SABC's approach to programming is guided by the following principles:

- The SABC's programmes are underpinned by its core editorial values: equality, editorial independence, nation building, diversity, human dignity, accountability and transparency. These influence the production and commissioning of all its programmes.
- Across our portfolio of stations and channels we aim to ensure that the needs of all our audience segments are met. This extends to young and old, urban and rural in all our provinces, speakers of all the official languages, and people of different religious persuasions. It is obviously impossible for the SABC to please everyone all the time, but across our portfolio we endeavour to provide a wide range of information, education and entertainment in a variety of genres and formats, in which everyone can find something of interest some of the time.
- As South Africa's public broadcaster it is our duty to encourage the development of South African expression. We therefore aim to provide a showcase for South African talent: in film, theatre, and music, or on the sportsfield. We support South African culture and strive to develop programmes that are identifiably South African and contribute to a sense of national identity, of shared experience, and to the goal of nation building.
- While we endeavour to recount the story of South Africa in all its complexity, we also deal with African and global issues through our programmes. We aim to contextualise for South Africans their life as global citizens, and to bring them the very best of the programmes the world has to offer.
- Freedom of expression is at the heart of our programmes. We provide a home for programme makers that encourages them to innovate, to take risks, to develop their craft so that audiences may be given a rich diversity of top quality programmes.



The SABC's approach to programming is further expanded in the Local Content Policy, the Language Broadcasting Policy and in specific genre policies including the News, Current Affairs and Information Programming Policy, the Policy on Educational Broadcasting and the Policy on Religious Broadcasting.

TASTE AND DECENCY

The issue of taste and decency in programmes is often controversial in that it involves judgements based on opinion, instead of hard fact. Until its amendment, the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters restricted what was broadcast if it was deemed tasteless or indecent on the grounds of public morality. However, the new dispensation acknowledges that the notion of public morality is a relative and culturally specific concept, and therefore very difficult to define. In addition, the freedom of expression provisions of the Constitution are held to protect even unpopular and offensive speech. It is believed that any attempt to curb speech carries the potential to stifle artistic creativity, which is seen as fundamental to broadcasting.

Instead of placing a complete prohibition on material that might give offence, the Code of Conduct is now framed in terms of requirements for broadcasters to:

- Give the audience adequate warning beforehand when they believe material may upset viewers/listeners
- Be sensitive and circumspect in their scheduling of such material
- Make sure material that is unsuitable for children is not broadcast outside the watershed period.

Whereas the SABC strives to minimise what audiences might find distasteful or tasteless, the public broadcaster does have to deal frankly with controversial topics and cannot avoid tackling issues because of the risk of offending certain people.

The SABC broadcasts programmes that some people might oppose, or find distasteful or offensive, but that have creative or social merit. These programmes are aired:

- With due consideration of viewer/listener sensibilities
- With audience advisories
- At appropriate times.

Careful scheduling and due warning or advice allow viewers to make informed choices about what they want to see and hear. This practice does not detract from the SABC's editorial responsibilities in any way, but actually entrenches the culture of respect for freedom of expression, and the right to receive and impart information.

AUDIENCE ADVISORIES

The Code of Conduct for Broadcasters is based on the notion that audiences should be given the freedom and responsibility to choose what they wish to see and hear, but that they can take this responsibility only when they are informed in advance about material that is explicit, or may not be suitable for children. The Code requires broadcasters to issue warnings that are clear to the audiences.

These warnings are given at the beginning of broadcasts, and include age indicators, and content such as graphic or excessive violence, explicit sexual conduct, nudity and/or bad language, including profanity.

Respecting the audience's right to choose means the broadcaster should not allow material that viewers and listeners might find threatening or shocking to intrude unexpectedly. The audience is more likely to respond less negatively to violent or distressing scenes if they have been alerted in advance.

The SABC has therefore established the following procedures for acceptance and screening of programmes.

TELEVISION

- Each channel employs a full-time staff of Programme Acceptance Officers to view and classify all the programmes and films to be broadcast by the channel, using a set of guidelines for classification of potentially controversial material. If an officer is in doubt about a classification, it is referred to the Supervisor of the Programme Acceptance Unit, who may take the decision, or refer it for review and classification to the Steering Committee of the channel and/or the Manager: Broadcast Compliance.
- Classification includes deciding on the appropriate age indicator and warnings about content to be placed on the programme, and the most suitable time-slot for the broadcast.
- The age ratings used by the SABC channels are PG (parental guidance), PG13, 13, 16 and 18.
- Standardised warning symbols are displayed on any programme containing material that could be disturbing: V (violence), S (sex), N (nudity), L (bad language, including profanity), and/or P (prejudice).
- The age rating and warning symbols are displayed for 60 seconds at the start of the programme, and for 30 seconds after each advertising break. These times could be increased for extremely controversial material.
- Cautionary announcements are made verbally at the start of programmes that could be exceptionally disturbing to certain viewers.
- Schedules published in the print media should all carry audience advisories.
- On-screen promos and line-ups should display the age indicator and warning symbols for each programme, for the full duration of the promo.
- The SABC's policy on consumer advice requires all the music videos and fillers to be programme accepted, and scheduled in specific time-slots in accordance with content and the watershed.

RADIO

Since radio is a more pervasive medium than television, as much care should be taken to respect the audience's rights as for television. The same principles of advisories apply when broadcasting sensitive material, or anything that may disturb certain listeners, or is unsuitable for children.

SCREENING OF FILMS

When there is a Films and Publications Board (FPB) classification — in terms of the Films and Publications Act, No 65 of 1996 — for the version of a film to be broadcast, that certification may be used as a guide. An age restriction imposed by the FPB may never be lowered for TV, but may be raised, at the discretion of the channel. These are the FPB classifications:

- "A": suitable for all ages. These films do not contain anything that is considered harmful or disturbing to even very young children.
- "PG": Parental Guidance. This alerts parents to films that contain scenes, or deal with themes, that might confuse or upset certain children if they were to watch them alone. Parents are advised to monitor their children's viewing.
- "10", "13", "16" or "18": films that are unsuitable for children under the stipulated age. This is a legally restrictive classification.

No version of a film that has been refused FPB certification may be broadcast at any time, under any circumstances.

SCHEDULING AND THE WATERSHED

TELEVISION

The Code of Conduct specifies a watershed period for television broadcasters. The requirements are as follows:

- Programmes on television that contain scenes of violence, sexually explicit conduct, nudity and/or bad language and are intended for adult audiences may not be broadcast outside the watershed period.
- Promotional material and music videos that contain scenes of violence, sexually explicit conduct, nudity and/or bad language and are intended for adult audiences may not be broadcast outside the watershed period.





- The watershed period extends from 21:00 to 05:00.
- During the watershed period, progressively less suitable (more adult) material may be shown. For instance, a programme might be acceptable at 23:00 that would not be suitable at 21:00.
- Some of the programmes broadcast outside the watershed period might not be suitable for very young children. Sufficient information should be provided, in the form of regular scheduling patterns and/or on-air advice, to assist parents in making appropriate viewing choices.
- Broadcasters should be particularly alert to the likelihood of children watching programmes that begin before the watershed period and run into it.
- Given the likelihood of older children being in the audience during the watershed period, broadcasters are to give consumer advice that would allow parents to take informed decisions on the suitability of programmes for their family.

The basic principle of the watershed period is that material which is unsuitable for viewing by children should not be broadcast when large numbers of children may be expected to be watching TV. Before the watershed, nothing should be shown that is unsuitable for children, or for family viewing. After 21:00 parents are expected to share the responsibility with the broadcaster for what their children are permitted to see.

Regular broadcasting of programmes with age restrictions of 13 or over between 17:00 and 20:00 is not encouraged.

The SABC's programme scheduling should also take into account country-wide school holidays, public holidays, religious festivals/holidays, and events of cultural or international significance.

In general, the SABC's answer to the potential clash of interests between controversial programmes and some viewers' objections is that the effect of this can be greatly reduced by sensitive scheduling. In its role as a public broadcaster, the SABC is expected to extend the range of experience of its viewers and listeners through its programmes. We have, therefore, to strike a careful balance between respect for fundamental rights and audience sensitivities and expectations. Programmes that challenge accepted world views, and offer new experiences and opposing perspectives, are the hallmark of successful public service broadcasting.

RADIO

Although the Code of Conduct does not specify a watershed period for radio, the SABC operates by the dictum that stations should not broadcast material that is unsuitable for children at times when they are likely to form a large part of the audience. For instance, stations should be aware that children may be listening to the radio while travelling in cars and taxis on their way to and from school.

LANGUAGE

The Position Paper on the Revision of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters notes that in terms of the freedom of expression provisions in the Constitution, it is impossible to prohibit "offensive" language. The thinking in the new Code is that when broadcasting material that contains profanity, or other religiously insensitive material that is likely to give offence to a section of the audience, broadcasters should give warnings and be sensitive in their scheduling.

The Code also says that bad language, including profanity and other religiously insensitive material, should not be used in programmes that are specially designed for children. Further, that no excessively or grossly offensive language should be used before the watershed on television, or at times when large numbers of children are likely to be part of the audience.

As a public broadcaster, the SABC is an important source of information and culture, and could influence standards and values through its use of language. The SABC has therefore to maintain high standards of integrity with regard to language usage. This is also one of the most frequent causes for complaint, particularly incorrect grammar, mispronunciation, negative stereotypes and profanity.

The SABC's policy on language usage is as follows:

- Language should not be used simply for its shock value
- Profanity should never be used gratuitously
- Whereas there is no ban on the use of bad language in programmes, it must be defensible in terms of context and authenticity/credibility.

Further guidelines on language usage are contained in the Language Broadcasting Policy.

DISCRIMINATION AND STEREOTYPES

The new Code does not deal with stereotyping and discrimination. Instead, broadcasters are required to develop their own internal guidelines for dealing with these matters. Given South Africa's past, and the SABC's role in healing divisions, it is imperative for the SABC not to broadcast programmes that promote discrimination or stereotyping on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability. The SABC is committed to avoiding language and images that reinforce stereotypes or offend communities or individuals.

We are further committed to reflecting diversity positively and to including in our programmes non-stereotypical representations of the disabled, women, black and gay South Africans who have often been marginalised from the mainstream media or represented in narrow and stereotypical terms.

The SABC's policy is as follows:

- Every part of society should be treated with respect
- People should not be identified solely by ethnic origin, and colour should be mentioned only when it is relevant to the topic under discussion.
- Any unnecessary reference to disability should be avoided, as such reference is often seen as insulting or implying deficiency. Language usage could add to this impression: eg Use "deaf mute" instead of "deaf and dumb", and "a person who has a disability" instead of "invalid" or "cripple" or "retarded".
- Non-sexist language avoids giving offence, or creating the impression — through repetition — that certain activities are associated with only one sex.
- Humour can also create and reinforce stereotypes. The SABC avoids humour that is excessively exploitative, uncalled for, cruel, or designed to the prejudice of a person or group.

It should be noted that these requirements are not intended to prevent broadcasting of material that is factual, or views that are expressed in satirical or dramatic works. Once again, the context in which the language is used should be considered, and proper scheduling will ensure that material that may give offence, or is unsuitable for children, will not be broadcast inappropriately.

VIOLENCE

The Code of Conduct has extensive requirements for the representation of violence:

"14. Broadcasters shall not broadcast any material which, judged within context:

- Contains gratuitous violence in any form i.e. violence which does not play an integral role in developing the plot, character or theme of the material as a whole
- Sanctions, promotes or glamorises violence.

"15. Violence against women

Broadcasters shall: -

- Not broadcast material which, judged within context, sanctions, promotes or glamorises any aspect of violence against women
- Ensure that women are not depicted as victims of violence unless the violence is integral to the story being told
- Be particularly sensitive not to perpetuate the link between women in a sexual context and women as victims of violence.





"16. Violence against specific groups

- Licensees shall not broadcast material which, judged within context, sanctions, promotes or glamorises violence based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or mental or physical disability.
- Licensees are reminded generally of the possible dangers of some people imitating violence, details of which they see, hear or read about.

"17. The above mentioned prohibitions shall not apply to -

- A bona fide scientific, documentary, dramatic, artistic, or religious broadcast which, judged within context, is of such nature;
- Broadcasts which amount to discussion, argument or opinion on a matter pertaining to religion, belief or conscience; or
- Broadcasts which amount to a bona fide discussion, argument or opinion on a matter of public interest."

Violence manifests itself in many forms, and people's attitudes to it range from disgust to passive acceptance and approval, depending on the context. The media's portrayal of violence may influence how it is received and acted on in society, and it has been suggested that violence broadcast by the media may induce apathy, insensitivity, or aggression in certain individuals. Modern technology allows broadcasting of images of violence to people who have little or no real contact with it in their daily life. The SABC therefore has a duty not to glamorise any type of violence, nor to promote it unnecessarily, though there are times when it could help to portray a story, evoke compassion, prompt help, or simply be an accurate representation of real events.

In addition to the requirements of the Code of Conduct, the SABC's policy on violence is as follows:

- The SABC may broadcast programmes or scenes containing images of violence, if these are necessary for the portrayal of legitimate information or context
- Any broadcasting of material containing scenes of violence, or violent behaviour, should be justifiable in the context of the SABC's functions and purpose
- The SABC's aim is not to see how much violence will be tolerated, but how little is needed to achieve honest ends without undue dramatic or editorial compromise
- When violence is to be shown, some form of audience advisory should be used to give advance notice of the content
- The subject of suicide, or attempted suicide, should be treated with discretion. No detailed demonstration of the means of suicide may be given
- The portrayal of dangerous behaviour that children could easily imitate should be avoided
- Viewers are sensitive about violence or cruelty to animals, and such material should be used prudently.

Further guidelines on violence in news programmes is dealt with in the News, Current Affairs and Information Programming Policy.

PRIVACY AND DIGNITY

The Constitution protects fundamental human rights, and affords every South African the right to privacy and human dignity. The Code of Conduct says the electronic media should exercise exceptional care and consideration in matters involving the private lives and private concerns of individuals, bearing in mind that the right to privacy may be overridden by legitimate public interest.

The right to privacy must therefore be respected in all the SABC programmes. However, in certain circumstances the public's right to information may take precedence over privacy. Decisions of this kind are to be taken with due consideration of the SABC's values, and possible consequences of the action should be deliberated carefully. The following should act as guidelines:

- The public has a right to receive information about public figures and public institutions, if the information is in the public interest
- Invasion of privacy may be justified in order to give information that has a bearing on someone's performance of public duties, or on any matter of public interest
- It is important to distinguish between those aspects of the private lives of public figures that are pertinent to their public duties, and those that are not

- Where it does not affect public interest, public figures should have the same right to privacy as others.

INTRUSION INTO GRIEF, COVERAGE OF SUFFERING AND DISTRESS

Careful consideration guides the SABC in its interaction with people who are grieving or in distress. They are often in an intensely emotional state and may not be able to take rational decisions on making comments or being interviewed, and discretion should be used in filming or interviewing them. Broadcasting their displays of distress should be kept to a minimum. A wide shot of someone being comforted is less intrusive than a lingering close-up of someone obviously in distress.

The SABC is committed to:

- Respecting the right to human dignity and privacy of everyone, but especially those who are grieving.
- Treating grieving people with extreme sensitivity, in any event, and generally capturing their situation pictorially only with their express and informed consent.
- Not identifying victims of rape, or of sexual violence in general, without their express and informed consent.
- Not identifying child victims of abuse or crime unless exceptional circumstances would indicate it to be in the best interests of the child.
- Not disclosing the HIV status of anyone without their express consent.

The guidelines are elaborated on further in the News, Current Affairs and Information Programming policy. Editorial staff should also consult the Legal Guidelines for Editorial Staff.

PHONE-IN AND DISCUSSION PROGRAMMES

Phone-in and discussion programmes are an accepted and important means of broadcasting individual points of view on topics. However, the host should take special care to maintain the SABC's editorial principles of fairness, impartiality and balance, and to ensure that a wide range of views are broadcast.

The host should steer callers and guests away from making comments that may violate the law or SABC policy, and reprimand or contradict such callers tactfully, when necessary. It is important to ensure, as far as possible, that programmes do not become a focus or platform for organised pressure groups or irresponsible individuals. A short pre-interview by a "screener" should be used for these purposes. A record should be kept of the names of all the speakers and their contact information. This record should be kept for at least 30 days.

Since phone-in and discussion programmes are not a scientific way of surveying public opinion on any matter, there should be no suggestion — explicit or implicit — that the views broadcast reflect wider public opinion. Further guidelines on this subject are dealt with in the News, Current Affairs and Information Programming Policy.

CHILDREN

The Code of Conduct stipulates the following regarding children:

- Broadcasters are reminded that children embrace a wide range of maturity and sophistication, and in interpreting the Code it is legitimate for broadcasters to distinguish, if appropriate, those approaching adulthood from a much younger, pre-teenage audience.
- Broadcasters shall not broadcast material that is unsuitable for children at times when large numbers of them may be expected to be part of the audience.
- Broadcasters shall exercise particular caution, as provided below, in the depiction of violence in children's programming.
- In children's programming portrayed by real-life characters, violence shall, whether physical, verbal or emotional, be portrayed only when it is essential to the development of a character and plot.
- Animated programming for children, while accepted as a stylised form of storytelling that could contain non-realistic violence, shall not have violence as its central theme, and shall not invite dangerous imitation.





- Programming for children shall with due care deal with themes that could threaten their sense of security, when portraying, for example, domestic conflict, death, crime, or the use of drugs.
- Programming for children shall with due care deal with themes which could invite children to imitate acts that they see on screen or hear about, such as the use of plastic bags as toys, use of matches, the use of dangerous household products as playthings, or other dangerous physical acts.
- Programming for children shall not contain realistic scenes of violence, which create the impression that violence is the preferred or only method to resolve conflict between individuals.
- Programming for children shall not contain realistic scenes of violence that minimise or gloss over the effect of violent acts. Any realistic depiction of violence shall portray, in human terms, the consequences of that violence for its victims and its perpetrators.
- Programming for children shall not contain frightening or otherwise excessive special effects not required by the story line.

For both entertainment and education, the SABC offers programmes for children, from toddlers to adolescents. Material for young audiences is extensive and should be designed to reach different target groups at times best suited to their needs, age and level of maturity.

The SABC takes special care to ensure that programmes children are likely to watch unsupervised would not cause alarm or distress, or incite aggressive behaviour.

It is noteworthy that offering children enjoyable and enriching programmes should not be confused with concealing the real world from them. Adults sometimes seek to exclude from television certain images and words, or coverage of certain events, in order to protect children. For some children, though, the world is already violent and dangerous, and it is important for the media — especially television — to help them understand and deal with their own lives.

Adults often have strong views about how children ought to behave, and expect children's programmes to show only ideal patterns of behaviour. However, programmes that are not based on children's own needs and interests tend to be seen as artificial and irrelevant.

There are further guidelines on children's programming in the Policy on Language Broadcasting and the Policy on Educational Broadcasting.

SEX AND NUDITY

Sex and nudity may give offence, and broadcasters are encouraged to give their audiences adequate warning and to schedule such material when children are not expected to be in the audience in large numbers.

Broadcasters are prohibited from carrying material classified as XX (sexually explicit) in terms of the Films and Publications Act, or material which, judged in context, contains a scene or scenes, simulated or real, of any of the following:

- A person who is, or is depicted as being, under the age of 18 participating in, engaging in, or assisting another person to engage in sexual conduct or a lewd display of nudity
- Explicitly violent sexual conduct
- Bestiality
- Explicit sexual conduct that degrades a person in the sense that it advocates a particular form of hatred based on gender and that constitutes incitement to cause harm.

The Code says that the restrictions do not apply to bona fide scientific or documentary programmes, or dramatic material which, judged in context, is of such a nature.

The Code also requires scenes depicting sexual conduct to be broadcast only during the watershed period, and that where an exception is made for a programme with a serious educational purpose, this should be approved in advance by the most senior programme executive, or a delegated alternative. The Code provides that explicit portrayal of violent sexual behaviour is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances, and should follow this same approval process.

The SABC's policy on the portrayal of sex and sexuality is that it needs to be defensible in the context, and presented with tact and discretion. This, with adequate advisories, should make for greater acceptability to the viewing public.

When representation of sexual intercourse is justified, it should generally be reserved for after 22:30. It is worth remembering, though, that if a series on sex were made for adolescents, there would be no point in broadcasting it late at night. Exceptions may also be allowed for nature films, programmes with a serious educational purpose, or where the representation is a graphical illustration (delineated in cartoons or diagrams), but these are to be approved by the channel head.

When sexual topics feature in news, documentaries and discussions, programme makers should observe the need for careful scheduling and labelling. Tactful handling can help prevent the most sensitive of subjects from giving widespread offence. Any programme dealing with sex and sexuality should be treated with care and without sensationalism.

Just as the SABC does not condone racist material, or unnecessary violence, it does not present sexual violence, or exploitative or non-consensual sexual relations, as acceptable.

Whereas most of the negative reaction from the public is prompted by depiction, even discussion of sex attracts some criticism. However, it is the SABC's responsibility as a public broadcaster to encourage debate and open discussion of sex, sexuality and sexual roles.

PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH PROGRAMME COMPLAINTS

Complaints from members of the public that are received at the SABC and relate to matters of policy or compliance with regulatory requirements are dealt with by the office of the Manager: Broadcast Compliance. When such complaints are received by the channels or stations, or in any other department, they should be referred to that office without delay.

The SABC's policy is to deal with every such complaint. The response is either prepared in consultation with, or communicated immediately to, the management of the channel/station concerned, or the relevant head of SABC News. The services are required to take ownership of complaints about their services.

Trends in complaints, and all the formal complaint processes, are reported to Top Management monthly.

COMPLAINTS LODGED WITH THE BCCSA

If a member of the public lodges a formal complaint with the BCCSA about a programme broadcast on any of the SABC services, the BCCSA notifies the SABC in writing, provides a copy of the complaint, and indicates whether a copy of the programme should accompany the written response from the SABC.

When the BCCSA requests material for review in any complaint process, the SABC is obligated to provide a complete off-air copy of the programme that includes any on-screen and/or verbal consumer advice, as well as a transcription of the text and the Final Control Sheet for the programme, if necessary. The Manager: Broadcast Compliance requests this material from the relevant service, and it should be supplied within three (3) days.

The Manager: Broadcast Compliance prepares the SABC's statement of defence, in consultation with the staff responsible for the broadcast, who may be requested to provide comments in writing. This submission, together with the material requested, has to be delivered to the BCCSA's premises within ten (10) working days of notification of the complaint.

The formal process then proceeds as follows:

- After receiving the material, the Chairperson of the BCCSA decides whether the SABC's statement of defence (explanation) is acceptable, or whether the complaint should be dealt with by adjudication, or heard by a Tribunal. If the complaint is to be heard by Tribunal, the BCCSA should give the SABC reasonable notice of the date of the hearing, and indicate which clause of the Code is to be applied.



- When giving notice of a Tribunal hearing, the BCCSA informs the SABC whether the complainant will have legal representation. If so, the Manager: Broadcast Compliance may request assistance from SABC Legal Services, and the Head of Legal services has the discretion to engage external legal counsel. If the SABC considers that the complainant has the intention of taking further action in the matter, the SABC may ask the BCCSA to request the complainant to waive his or her right to seek redress in a civil action, and the waiver issue could be heard by the Tribunal. Failure to secure such a waiver could result in the SABC's refusal to present its case before the BCCSA.
- If the SABC has sufficient cause for regarding a judgment issued or sanction imposed by the BCCSA to have been an unfair ruling or penalty, the SABC may request a review of the case. A Tribunal excluding Commissioners who had made the original ruling would then review the judgment, which could subsequently be confirmed, amended, or overturned.
- If a complainant considers the BCCSA's ruling on his or her complaint to have been unfair, the complainant may appeal against the judgment, in which case a new Tribunal would hear the appeal.

SPONSORSHIP OF PROGRAMMES

The SABC complies with ICASA's regulations on programme sponsorship.

ICASA defines programme sponsorship as the direct or indirect financing, whether partial or total, of the production or transmission of broadcast programme material by an advertiser or person seeking to promote their activities or product¹.

ICASA regulates programme sponsorship and is concerned to ensure that editorial control remains with the broadcaster. To this end, the regulations state that if there is any depiction of the name or logo of the person who provides a programme sponsorship, during the sponsored programme, that depiction should be subordinate to the content of the programme. The regulations also state that where there is programme sponsorship, the sponsor's association with the programme must be stated clearly, both before and after the programme.

The stations and channels, together with the SABC's Sales and Marketing Department ensure that the SABC is in compliance with these regulations.

INFOMERCIALS

ICASA has developed rules for infomercials², with which the SABC complies. These state that:

- Infomercials may not be carried during primetime or during children's programmes
- Infomercials must be labeled in such a way that it is clear that they are not programme material
- No more than two hours of infomercials are allowed within the performance period (5:00 - 23:00) per channel per day.

In addition to the above, ICASA encourages broadcasters to ensure that infomercials are not carried on all free-to-air channels at the same time.

The stations and channels, together with the SABC's Sales and Marketing Department ensure that the SABC is in compliance with these regulations.

REVIEW

This policy is reviewed by the SABC Board every five years.

¹ICASA Regulations relating to the Definition of Advertising, and the Regulation of Infomercials and Programme Sponsorship and respect Broadcasting Activities, 1999.

²As Above

NEWS, CURRENT AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION PROGRAMMING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The SABC occupies a distinctive position of trust in the lives of its viewers and listeners. We are the most extensive, all-inclusive and diverse news organisation in South Africa. The SABC considers it a duty to provide consistent, relevant, useful and top-quality information and analysis on which all South Africans can rely as they discourse, form opinions and build a common future.

The Independent Broadcasting Authority Act, the Broadcasting Act, the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters and the SABC's Editorial Code set out the essential requirements for news and current affairs services that are to be studied, understood and observed by every member of the SABC's news staff.

The policy covers all the news, current affairs and information programming broadcast by the SABC, including news bulletins and current affairs programmes provided for radio, television and SABC Africa.

THE SABC'S ROLE IN NEWS, CURRENT AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION PROGRAMMES

The SABC recognises the important part played by news and information in human, social and economic growth and development, especially in societies such as ours that are embarking on nation building. The SABC takes account of this, as it is in these circumstances that news, current affairs and information services can be the catalyst for positive and progressive development and change.

Through this policy, the SABC is well positioned — and unmatched in the market — to meet the challenge of telling the South African story with compassion, determination and resolution, while creating forums where South Africans from every walk of life can communicate ideas about their common future.

The SABC should offer information that is substantial, and analysis that is authentic and meaningful to ordinary, enquiring South Africans so that they can form their own opinions. Also, since our services are for everyone's use, they should take account of representation and identity, and reflect life as it is. This means accounts and interviews, and other forms of presentation, should reflect and draw on South Africa's diversity of people, languages, cultures, genders, abilities and classes, and the full spectrum of opinions, perspectives and comment.

For the SABC to achieve these objectives, we require — and our audiences rightly expect — the news staff to uphold the highest editorial and ethical standards consistently and diligently. Clearly what we uphold as a common good for society, such as decent and incorruptible values, robust and vigorous creativity, and healthy and wholesome growth and development, lies at the very heart of good journalism.

OBJECTIVITY, ACCURACY, FAIRNESS, IMPARTIALITY AND BALANCE

The SABC's freedom of expression and its journalistic, creative and programming independence is guaranteed and protected in law. This freedom comes with an obligation: that every member of its news staff shall uphold the highest level of professional and ethical standards. These standards are captured in the Editorial Code of the SABC, some of the clauses of which are reproduced below:





- We report, contextualise, and present news and current affairs honestly by striving to disclose all the essential facts and by not suppressing relevant, available facts, or distorting by wrong or improper emphasis.
- We do not allow advertising, commercial, political or personal considerations to influence our editorial decisions. The SABC is expected to provide information and as part of this duty should evaluate, analyse and critically appraise government policies and programmes. The SABC is not the mouthpiece of the government of the day, nor should it broadcast its opinion of government policies, unless they relate directly to broadcasting matters.
- We seek balance by presenting relevant views on matters of importance, as far as possible. This may not always be achieved in a single programme or news bulletin, but should be done within a reasonable time.
- We are guided by news merit and judgement in reaching editorial decisions. Fairness does not require editorial staff to be unquestioning, or the SABC to give every side of an issue the same amount of time.
- We do not accept gifts, favours, free travel, special treatment or privileges that could compromise our integrity, and any such offer is to be disclosed.
- We foster open dialogue with our viewers and listeners, as we are accountable to the public for our reports.

The Code of Conduct for Broadcasters also requires the SABC to report news truthfully, accurately and objectively. In this regard, the staff may not allow their professional judgement to be influenced by pressures from political, commercial or other sectional interests.

Since they are professionals, SABC journalists and other news staff have personal opinions, beliefs and preferences arising from social, educational, cultural and other forms of nurturing. South Africa's apartheid past, and individuals' experiences in contesting and living under it, also accentuates differences that could create unfairness and partiality, or perceptions of such bias. It is the responsibility of SABC journalists and editorial staff to ensure that these forms of individual and collective nurturing do not lead to any form or perception of inequity and prejudice.

In order to meet the standard of journalistic objectivity it is the responsibility of SABC news staff to be aware of such personal opinions, beliefs and preferences, and to take them into account in gathering and transmitting news. SABC reporting should be, and be seen to be, accurate, fair, impartial and balanced. Our audiences have the right to expect that SABC news and current affairs programming will not reflect the personal views of editorial staff. In assigning staff, SABC editors should be sensitive to published views, associations and backgrounds, so as to avoid any perception of bias, or of vulnerability to undue influence.

SABC news staff are expected to present issues fairly, should not take sides, and should afford the public access to the full range of views on a subject. In this regard, editorial staff may not become emotional, or use emotive language, in writing stories or conducting interviews.

For the SABC to retain its credibility, accuracy is imperative. Research for any news programme has to be thorough, and be checked and cross-checked. Substantiation is also an important tool for assuring accuracy. Another agency or SABC correspondent should substantiate national and international reports that are not obtained first hand. News and current affairs stories and feeds taken from international broadcasters, bureaux and correspondents are always to be acknowledged, and to be consistent with SABC editorial policies and standards.

SABC editorial staff should at all times endeavour to present stories in a fair and balanced manner. When exceptional circumstances make it impossible to achieve fairness and balance, or where a damaging critique of an individual or institution is presented, those criticised should be given an opportunity to present their side of the story: the "right of reply". When the response from such an individual or institution is reflected in a subsequent programme, it should be given comparable prominence.

APOLOGIES AND CORRECTIONS

With the best of intentions and efforts, mistakes still happen. When a serious factual error has been made, it should be admitted and corrected, as soon as it is realised. The Code of Conduct requires any rectification to be presented with such a degree of prominence and timing as may be adequate and fair in the circumstances so as to attract attention readily.

LANGUAGE AND TONE IN NEWS

It is important for the SABC to get its facts and use of language right. Given our nation's divided history and previously unequal learning systems, the use of South African languages should always take account of the needs and sensitivities of our audiences. This means the use and tone of language should take account of our different cultures, abilities, classes and experiences; and avoid exaggeration, value judgment, unnecessary provocation or lack of objectivity.

It has now become a standard practice for news stories and bulletins to be produced and broadcast in all eleven official languages. This is another important dimension to language: inaccuracies easily creep in when stories are translated. For this reason, only staff who have the required language skills should translate stories, and they should do so accurately and fairly.

Further guidelines on language use are laid out in the Programming Policy and the Language Broadcasting Policy.

INTERVIEWING

Interviews are an important tool of journalism. In order to achieve the objective of an interview to break new ground and get new information — it is important for interviewing to be purposeful and well researched.

For an interview to be successful, it is important for staff to inform the interviewee of the purpose of an interview, its length and any other relevant matter, and to establish how the interviewee prefers to be addressed.

Care should be taken when interviewing ordinary people who do not have any experience of broadcasting. We should also make allowances for the language barrier: confusion and misunderstanding, or difficulty of expression, may arise when an interview is conducted in a language other than the interviewee's home language. If necessary, an interviewer should repeat questions and confirm that the interviewee has a clear understanding of what is asked, and may request the interviewee to clarify answers. We should not make assumptions, or reconstruct an interviewee's responses later; the interview is the opportunity to do so.

Conversely, interviewers are increasingly faced with interviewees who attempt to steer the interview on their own course. In such cases, interruptions may be justified. Any unwillingness to answer questions should be shown up, but this should be done calmly and politely. Further guidelines on dealing with guests are dealt with elsewhere in this policy and also in the policy on Programming.

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS NEWS

SABC News gives special attention to economics and business news aimed at informing and educating our audiences. Examples are business, commercial and labour laws; harmful business practices; effective ways of saving and spending money; prices, inflation and other basic economic indicators, and how these affect our audiences.

In commissioning and broadcasting economics and business news SABC news staff should ensure that a range of views, perspectives and opinions — not only the orthodox ones — are presented in a balanced, fair and accurate manner.





INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Investigative journalism, to which the SABC has made an important contribution, is a key element of SABC news services. SABC investigative journalism plays a vital part in pursuing matters of public concern systematically through innovative and reliable journalism, making it possible to access information that is crucial to the construction of a democratic society.

As a rule, and given its potential impact on the lives of a large part of society, investigative journalism at the SABC always takes into account the relative importance of an issue. Minor matters should not be dealt with when more significant issues warrant attention.

While investigative journalism is robust and thorough in its examination of issues, it must also adhere to the highest ethical and journalistic standards, be in the public interest, offer valuable information and authentic analysis, promote public dialogue and enable the public to form their own opinions.

Given its nature, investigative journalism frequently involves legal considerations, and on such occasions the advice of the Chief Legal Adviser is to be sought.

As a rule, SABC journalists conduct their work in the open. Clandestine methods of gathering news and information should be used with due regard to the law, the right to privacy, and the significance of the information. If it were to become necessary and in the public interest to gather information to which the public normally does not have access, the matter should be referred to the relevant Head of News. As a matter of policy, the SABC does not use hidden cameras and microphones to gather news. In exceptional circumstances — such as illegal, antisocial or fraudulent activity, or clear and significant abuse of public trust, and where alternative means of newsgathering are impossible — the use of such equipment might be in the public interest. If so, the matter is to be referred to the relevant Head of News, and in all these cases there should be consultation with the Chief Legal Adviser.

USE OF GUESTS, ANALYSTS AND SPECIALIST COMMENTATORS

The SABC's principle of providing the full spectrum of opinions, perspectives and comment also applies to the selection and use of guests, analysts and specialist commentators. This requires editorial staff to choose, as participants, people who hold a wide range of views, opinions and perspectives, and are drawn from all over the country. Such people should be required to declare any vested interest they may have in the matter to be discussed.

PAYING FOR INFORMATION

The Code of Conduct prohibits broadcasters from paying criminals for information, unless compelling societal interests indicate the contrary.

As a matter of policy, the SABC does not pay people for information.

In circumstances where compelling public interest and the right to know are involved and access to information cannot be gained by other means, the matter is to be referred to the relevant Head of News for a decision. When payment has been made, this fact is to be reported in the broadcast.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS

Polling and random sampling are methods used to discover facts, uncover attitudes and confirm hypotheses. However, to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings of such research, it has to be done according to tested, scientific methods. Before broadcasting the results of non-SABC surveys, journalists should obtain information on the methods used and the main results of the survey; seek the opinion of experts in the field, and consult SABC Market Intelligence on the validity of the methods used and the interpretation of the findings.

The SABC may also conduct its own public opinion surveys, for which it takes full accountability.

The Head of News Research approves any such survey, including the design, questionnaires and interpretation of the results, after consultation with the relevant Head of News.

Statements gathered (live or pre-recorded) from people chosen at random — vox pops — are not scientific surveys. These should be presented solely to illustrate the range and texture of popular opinion on a topical issue. There should not be any suggestion — explicit or implicit — that the views broadcast in such a survey reflect wider public opinion.

PROTECTION OF SOURCES

The SABC firmly upholds the principle of journalistic freedom and sees the protection of a journalist's sources as a key element of this principle.

At times, information that ought to be given to the public is available to journalists only through confidential sources. If the confidentiality of such sources of information were not respected, it would restrict the free flow of information in a free and democratic society.

In the event of a source not wanting to be identified publicly, the SABC uses the information obtained only when the source is known to the journalist and has prima facie credibility; the journalist has checked the reliability of the source and obtained corroboratory evidence from other relevant sources; and the identity and bona fides of the confidential source have been disclosed to the relevant Executive Producer ahead of the broadcast.

When protection of a source becomes a legal matter, the SABC does not advise its staff to refuse to obey an order of a court, but makes its legal counsel available for advice and to present legal argument in court to protect the source.

GENDER AND REPRESENTATION

Democratisation places an important responsibility on the SABC to include in our news services consciously and with due prominence — the perspectives and opinions of women who are making a crucial contribution to the political, social and economic life of South Africa. This is one of the important criteria for ensuring that the full range of comment is offered, so that our audiences may have a comprehensive overview of issues in order to form their own opinions. News staff should therefore endeavour to ensure fair gender representation in news and information programming.

PRIVACY

Promoting the human dignity of all South Africans is a cornerstone of our Constitution, and it is for this reason that the Bill of Rights is so central to it. Unlike the private commercial media, the SABC carries a special duty to uphold the Bill of Rights and to respect the dignity and private lives of individuals. For this reason, we respect individual's right to privacy and as a matter of policy do not violate such privacy unless it would be justified in the public interest.

The Programming Policy expands in more detail on the SABC's approach to matters of privacy.

REPORTING ON SUFFERING AND DISTRESS

The SABC Editorial Code states that we are circumspect in the presentation of brutality, violence, atrocities and personal grief.

When covering any accident, disaster or conflict the SABC always gives a full, accurate and factual account of relevant matters such as time, location and casualty figures. By doing so, we avoid causing needless distress or anxiety to those who already know of their loss. SABC editorial staff cover accidents and disasters with compassion and sensitivity that is frank and genuine.





The consequences of a tragic event or disaster call for considerable sensitivity on the part of the SABC. Reporting on these events should follow well established principles:

- As a rule, footage of the dead should not be broadcast unless there are compelling reasons to do so
- Those injured or grieving should not be put under any pressure to give interviews against their wishes
- As far as reasonably possible, next of kin should not learn bad news from a radio or TV newscast
- A funeral should be covered only with the permission of the family, and treated sensitively and without intrusion
- The time of day of transmission — before or after the watershed — and audience sensibilities should always be considered
- When the content of a report or programme may upset sensitive viewers or children, a warning to that effect is to be given.

News bulletins should be prepared bearing in mind that children watch TV during the day and early evening, especially in school holidays. This could mean delaying graphic details and visuals of particularly disturbing events until the later bulletins, when it is reasonable to expect parents to be in a better position to monitor their children's viewing.

The guidelines are elaborated on further in the Programming Policy. Editorial staff should also consult the Legal Guidelines for Editorial Staff.

BROADCASTING EVENTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

The SABC gives full, or extended, live television and/or radio coverage to events of national importance. In scheduling these events, editorial staff should take into account that they inevitably result in schedule changes. Such events may include: the Opening of Parliament, the budget speech, State occasions such as visits by foreign dignitaries and State funerals; major commemorative occasions, and the proceedings of national commissions of inquiry.

Other events that may warrant live coverage and involve scheduling and programming changes include: major parliamentary debates, the opening of provincial legislatures, and significant policy conferences of the major political parties. Live coverage in this category requires approval of the relevant stations and channels, in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer.

When an event of national importance is of a party political nature, editorial staff are to ensure that the SABC policies on objectivity, accuracy, fairness, impartiality and balance are adhered to.

The Policy on Language Broadcasting outlines further requirements for broadcasting events of national importance.

ELECTION BROADCASTS

Broadcasting during elections is a testing time for the SABC. This is because it is during elections in particular that our commitment to objectivity, accuracy, fairness, impartiality and balance is scrutinised closely and evaluated assiduously. Election broadcasts are regulated by the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act and ICASA's regulations. However, news decisions during election periods have, as usual, to be driven by the news judgement of our news staff, and take account of the need to ensure that attention is given to the thorough examination of the views, policies and campaigns of all the main political parties.

This is also a trying time for our editorial staff, who experience considerable pressure from political parties seeking to influence our editorial decisions. While remaining courteous, staff should always refer complaints upwards to the appropriate offices.

News staff are required to study, understand and observe the statutory provisions on election broadcasts in the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act (see Sections 58, 59 and 60). These requirements include the limitations on party election broadcasts, the time to be made available to political parties, the duration and scheduling of party election broadcasts, and political advertising during election periods.

The SABC shall, in compliance with the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act, cease party election broadcasts 48 hours before the polling period begins.

RESTRICTIONS ON SPONSORSHIP OF NEWS, CURRENT AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION PROGRAMMES

The SABC's approach to the sponsorship of news, current affairs and information programmes takes into account our public and commercial services' programming responsibilities, applicable legal and regulatory requirements as stipulated from time to time by ICASA, and the overall performance and well-being of our stations and channels.

Our overriding concern, shared by ICASA, is to preserve the editorial independence and integrity of the programmes concerned. Like ICASA, the SABC seeks to ensure that editorial control of programmes remains with the broadcaster. Accordingly, it is the responsibility of broadcasters to ensure that editorial independence and integrity are not influenced by the presence of advertising and sponsorship, and to demonstrate this to ICASA's satisfaction.

Sponsorship of television news and current affairs has been prohibited by ICASA, and is therefore not allowed by the SABC. For radio, ICASA has allowed a window period for sponsorship of news, but has encouraged the industry to phase it out. Weather forecasts and sports bulletins that form part of TV news bulletins may be sponsored. Any product placement within news and current affairs programmes is strictly forbidden.

REVIEW

This policy is reviewed by the SABC Board every five years.





LANGUAGE BROADCASTING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

As South Africa's public broadcaster, the SABC embraces the constitutional duty to treat all the official languages equitably, and with equal respect. The Constitution also recognises the need to promote South African Sign Language and "the Khoi, Nama and San languages".

We are conscious of the important part the public broadcaster should play in facilitating the fulfilment of these rights, and pledge our commitment to working towards these goals.

This Language Broadcasting Policy is derived further from the Corporation's commitment to freedom of expression, which is protected by the Constitution, including the right of all South Africans to receive and impart information. We recognise that freedom of expression can be fully realised only when all South Africans can inform and be informed in their language of choice. Access to meaningful information would also empower South Africans to participate effectively in every facet of society.

We also recognise that language plays a crucial part in promoting and attaining the goals of building our democracy and our nation, and protecting and developing our uniquely diverse cultures. This is because the use and development of language is closely linked to the development of culture and identity. These matters are particularly important in our relatively new democracy, where language will be instrumental in its growth and development.

Owing to its virtually universal accessibility and use, the public broadcaster has a unique responsibility to broadcast programmes that promote the development of national identity while supporting the development of our languages and cultures. South Africa, and consequently the public broadcaster, is also faced with a further challenge: that of bringing marginalised national languages, cultures and identities into the mainstream, so that they can develop and flourish, and become a core part of our nation building project.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

This policy takes into account the Constitution and a range of legislative and regulatory requirements — in particular those contained in the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act, the Broadcasting Act, and relevant ICASA policies and regulations.

Drawing on these, the SABC commits itself to being the voice and vision of all South Africans. Accordingly,

- We provide a range of distinctive, creative and top quality programmes in all 11 official languages across our radio and television portfolio, and strive to reflect the needs of each language community in our programming
- We maintain distinct and separate radio services in each of the 11 official languages
- We treat all the official languages equitably on our television services
- We integrate South Africa Sign Language into broadcasting as a means of making programming accessible to people with hearing disabilities
- We strive to include other non-official languages spoken in South Africa, with particular emphasis on the Khoi, Nama and San languages.

In acting on these commitments the SABC will be guided by the following:

- The need for institutions, including the public broadcaster, to take practical and positive steps to treat all the official languages fairly
- The need to address the marginalisation of indigenous languages and South African Sign Language in recognition of the impact of the previous systematic marginalisation of those languages
- The obligation to reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity, and multilingual nature of South Africa while promoting national unity

- The SABC's responsibility to be responsive to the needs of all South Africans, including the Deaf
- The importance of language in communication as the carrier of values, attitudes, culture and expression.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The SABC's primary role is to make its programmes accessible to all the audiences, and in that regard language is fundamental to any meaningful communication. In keeping with this, the SABC's aims to:

- Inform, educate and entertain South Africans in their home languages
- Promote understanding and acceptance of and between the linguistic and cultural groups in South Africa
- Contribute to the continuing development of the 11 official languages and South African Sign Language
- Promote multilingualism in South Africa

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The SABC is, in terms of the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act and the Broadcasting Act, required to provide broadcasting services in all the official languages and to cater specifically for the needs of people with hearing disabilities. Accordingly, this is an overarching policy, affecting many activities of the Corporation.

This policy should therefore be considered when the SABC:

- Develops strategic plans for the Corporation
- Develops business plans and budgets for the Corporation
- Formulates programme strategies, policies and plans for each radio station and television channel
- Determines training needs and strategies
- Develops audience research projects to gauge the needs of viewers and listeners and to assess response to programmes
- Formulates plans for universal service and access to broadcasting
- Investigates and formulates plans for the use of innovative technology.

USE OF LANGUAGE IN BROADCASTING

In fulfilling its duty to protect and nurture South Africa's official languages, the SABC strives to ensure that they are all spoken correctly. In doing so the SABC commits itself to celebrating the rich diversity of dialects and accents in each language group.

The SABC recognises that languages are dynamic, continually developing and adapting to circumstances; language in broadcasting should therefore take account of the evolution of languages.

Moreover, language use should accord with the programme genre. It is fair to assume that more formal language would be used in news programmes, whereas more conversational, colloquial or everyday language would be used in drama.

Language in broadcasting should also take account of the social expectations and values of different language groups, and the right of every South African to be treated with respect and dignity. Language usage in broadcasting should therefore avoid giving offence and causing hurt unnecessarily. It should encourage respect and concern for everyone, and be free of elements such as prejudice, and racist and sexist connotations. The Programming Policy and the Policy on News, Current Affairs and Information Programming expand further on this issue.



OPERATING PRINCIPLES

In striving to play its part in reaching these common national goals, the SABC's Language Broadcasting Policy takes account of, and is shaped by, a number of operating principles:

- Use of groupings such as cognate, shared and widely understood languages so as to make the most cost effective use of limited resources
- Special action on marginalised languages
- Achievement of language goals, including the use of South African Sign Language, firstly in targeted programme genres
- Combined use of both unilingual and multilingual programming
- Coverage of events of national importance to promote the development of national identity, unity and nation building
- Fair allocation of resources to achieve quality in programmes on all the broadcasting platforms
- Application of appropriate technologies to achieve language coverage and access goals
- Use of research to understand audiences' language broadcasting needs
- Introduction of three-year plans to focus implementation and monitoring of language policy
- Development of mutually beneficial relationships with key social partners, notably the Pan South African Language Board.

These operating principles are elaborated on below.

RADIO

Radio is still the most widely used and most accessible broadcasting medium in South Africa. It is used in homes, cars, taxis, trains, malls and food courts. South Africans can listen to the radio all day and all night. As audiences have fragmented increasingly into niche markets there has arisen a special responsibility for the SABC, as the public broadcaster, to offer a wide range of programmes to South Africans irrespective of age, income level or language. Accordingly, the SABC is charged with providing quality radio services in all 11 official languages. In making this pledge the SABC notes:

- The crucial part radio plays in the lives of many South Africans, as often the only medium available to them in their home language, and in many instances the only medium available at all
- The under-development of previously disadvantaged people and of their languages in South Africa, which must be redressed if we are to meet our commitment to delivering quality radio services
- The unique part radio can play in promoting people's right to receive information, to express themselves, and to inform others.

The SABC further commits itself to providing good quality radio programmes in non-official South African languages, in particular in the Khoi, Nama and San languages.

PROGRAMMING GUIDELINES

- A language service should be sensitive to and reflect the needs and lifestyles of the speakers of that language — including those of children, young people, urban and rural dwellers, and the elderly.
- A language service should provide programming in genres such as news and information, children's/educational programmes, and entertainment.
- Programmes should aim to reflect the realities of the target audience, while recognising the listeners' right to a wide range of programming from throughout South Africa and the world.
- Programmes should aim to foster unity and common South Africanness.

NEWS AND INFORMATION PROGRAMMES

The SABC recognises the important part that news and information programmes play in enabling all South Africans to participate effectively, and from an informed basis, in building our democracy, nation and economy. Meaningful access to information is therefore essential, and

involves not only reporting on events, but analysing issues of significance as well. We commit ourselves to providing comprehensive radio news and information programmes in all the official languages.

BROADCASTING EVENTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

The SABC is committed to airing events of national importance, such as the annual State of the Nation Address at the Opening of Parliament, and the Budget Speech, that warrant full or extended live coverage. Coverage of these events gives South Africans access to important and relevant information about our developing nation. On such occasions the SABC strives to ensure that all its language services cover them. To this end, the language services collaborate with, and complement, each other's programmes and schedules. The Policy on News, Current Affairs and Information Programming gives further information on broadcasting events of national importance.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES

The Broadcasting Act requires the SABC to meet children's programming needs. Children require informative, educational and entertaining programmes of excellent quality, in their home languages, that are aimed specifically at addressing their needs and instilling a sense of pride in their cultures and languages. These needs vary according to the circumstances and ages of children, from pre-school to schoolgoing and adolescence.

Radio programmes can play a supportive part in nurturing and developing children's language capacity, and cultural knowledge and experiences. Programmes can also assist in promoting understanding between children of different language and cultural communities.

The SABC addresses the needs of children in its language radio services by providing programmes that cater specifically for them.

The Programming Policy provides further information on children's programmes.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

The SABC commits itself to ensuring the fair allocation of financial and other resources to the language services so that they can meet the requirements of broadcasting programmes of comparable quality.

In allocating its resources, the SABC takes into account the historical imbalances between English and Afrikaans on one hand, and the nine African languages on the other. Moreover, the SABC takes into account that radio, owing to lower literacy levels and poverty, remains for many people the only medium available for receiving essential education and information, and good quality entertainment. Special attention is therefore given to developing and expanding programmes on services that target historically disadvantaged communities.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS

Through its Universal Service and Access Policy, which is described separately, the SABC ensures that its language services are accessible to South Africans who speak particular languages.


TELEVISION

The SABC is committed to treating all the official languages equitably on television.

This will be achieved across the television portfolio as a whole and not on each individual channel.

Since there is limited time available during prime time (18:00-22:00), the SABC is committed to considering and implementing innovative strategies for providing programmes equitably in all the official languages. One such strategy that the SABC is implementing is to schedule programmes in different languages in and across SABC television channels in a complementary way.





In meeting its mandate to provide television programmes in all the official languages, the SABC takes into account the following:

- The Constitutional requirement to treat all the official languages and cultures equitably
- The comparatively little television air time available, especially during prime time, and the complexities that arise in allocating time equitably to all the languages
- The similarities and differences between the official languages; for example, certain languages are part of a cognate group (languages that are mutually understandable within that group)³, others are not cognate but shared and understood by different communities⁴, whereas some are neither mutually understandable nor widely spoken⁵. In addition, some language communities are much larger than others
- The realisation that certain languages are recognised as being more marginalised than others (XiTsonga, TshiVenda, SisSwati and SiNdebele) and the additional responsibility this places on institutions such as the SABC to address this marginalisation
- The need to address the historical underdevelopment of the vast majority of South Africans and their languages in order to realise the rights of all people to equality and dignity
- The unique potential for television to showcase cultures and languages creatively, to nurture knowledge and experience of each other among the diverse people of South Africa, and to contribute to developing a national identity.

GUIDELINES FOR EQUITABLE TREATMENT

- The term equitable means just, fair and reasonable, not necessarily equal treatment. In this regard, the SABC strives to broadcast every official language on television, while ensuring that programmes are accessible to as many viewers as possible. We aim to complement our national television service by providing regional services as required by the Broadcasting Act, pending the licensing of these services by ICASA and the appropriation of funds for this purpose, by Parliament.
- Equitability is achieved through a combination of means, including unilingual productions and multilingual programmes. We strive to explore the use of technologies such as subtitling to ensure that programmes are accessible to as many viewers as possible. This objective is at times met the best by broadcasting in cognate or widely understood languages. Where this is applied, the SABC rotates the use of languages in any cognate group in order to achieve equitability.

In striving to achieve equitability, the following matters are taken into account:

- The overall time allocated to each language
- Scheduling of programmes when members of the target audiences are available
- The range of programme genres available in each language
- Financial and other resources for programmes in each of the official languages.

In determining allocations of time to different languages, the SABC has due regard to:

- The number of home language speakers of a language in the coverage area of a channel
- The geographical spread of the language
- The extent to which members of a language community are able to understand other languages
- The extent of marginalisation of the language
- The extent to which a language is understood by other South Africans
- Available resources.

These criteria are intended to ensure that all the languages receive some air time, but not necessarily in equal amounts. Moreover, when these criteria are applied effectively, a greater amount of programme time is dedicated to more widely spoken or shared languages, while committing to special projects for marginalised languages.

TELEVISION PROGRAMMING

In respect of television programming, the SABC commits itself to the following principles:

- Across the television portfolio, the SABC strives to broadcast a range of top quality programmes in each of the official languages in order to meet the information, education and entertainment needs of audiences comprehensively.
- The SABC strives to produce and screen news and information, children's educational programmes, and drama in different languages, while not neglecting other genres.
- The SABC strives to ensure that programmes in specific languages are broadcast at times when most of the members of the target audience in that language community are available.
- The SABC strives to broadcast programmes in the different languages that reflect the needs, lifestyles and circumstances of speakers of that language, including those of the children, young people, urban and rural dwellers, and the elderly.
- Scheduling of programmes across the SABC channels should be sensitive to audiences' rights to have access to a range of programmes in their home language, and in languages they understand. To this end, television programmes across the channels are scheduled in a complementary manner.
- Programmes aim to foster unity and a common South African identity, instead of separateness, and at promoting cross-cultural knowledge, appreciation and understanding. We believe that our country's diverse language groups and regions should be reflected to the nation and to themselves.
- The SABC creatively combines unilingual and multilingual programmes, and uses broadcasting technologies such as subtitling, to reach its language goals.

UNILINGUAL PROGRAMMES

The SABC ensures that across the television portfolio some programmes are dedicated to each official language. A programme would be classified as being in an official language only if most (i.e. more than 50%) of the programme were in that official language.

MULTILINGUAL PROGRAMMES


The SABC is conscious of the part multilingual programmes can play in promoting knowledge and understanding of the country's diversity of languages and cultures. Such programmes, when used creatively, also reach out to wider audiences.

Accordingly, the SABC actively encourages the production of meaningful multilingual programmes as a means of meeting its language broadcasting objectives. Multilingual programmes are those that include substantial amounts of more than one official language. In such programmes, no single language is spoken for more than half of the programme. Programmes that include token or insignificant proportions of other official languages are not classed as multilingual. The SABC is aware that certain colloquial speech in many, if not all, of the eleven official languages includes words or phrases adopted from other languages. Use of such colloquialisms, while encouraged in certain programmes genres, does not constitute multilingual programming.

TELEVISION NEWS, CURRENT AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION PROGRAMMES

The SABC is specifically obligated to provide comprehensive news and information programmes. As stated previously, meaningful access to information involves not only reporting on events, but providing substantial analysis of issues surrounding such events. Accordingly, the following principles are applied to all the SABC news, current affairs and information programmes on television:

- The SABC screens television news bulletins in all the official languages, and is sensitive to audience availability in scheduling news programmes
- Given the constraints of channel air time, the SABC makes use of cognate languages, on a rotational basis, and widely understood languages to meet this mandate

- 
- The SABC ensures that information programmes, including current affairs and documentaries, serve the needs of different language communities. In meeting this commitment, the SABC takes due cognisance of the fact that several languages are cognate to each other, or widely understood.

BROADCASTING EVENTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

The SABC is committed to broadcasting events of national importance that warrant full or extended live coverage, such as the Annual State of the Nation Address by the President at the opening of Parliament, and the Budget Speech.

When such events are televised, the SABC strives to ensure that the broadcasts are accessible to the widest range of South African language communities. This can be achieved through the use of a combination of cognate languages and widely understood languages, and the innovative use of broadcasting technology such as multiple soundtracks, subtitling, and sign language. The Policy on News, Current Affairs and Information Policy provides further information on the broadcasting of events of national interest.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES

Children require informative, educational and entertaining programming of excellent quality, in their home languages, that are aimed specifically at addressing their needs and instilling a sense of pride in their cultures and languages. These needs vary according to the circumstances and ages of children, from pre-school to schoolgoing and adolescence. The SABC recognises that many children, particularly pre-school children, understand only their home language.

The SABC strives to ensure that it broadcasts a range of top quality educational, informative and entertaining programmes for children of different age groups that are responsive to their language needs. The SABC strives continually to find creative ways of broadcasting programmes using different languages in order to meet the needs of every South African child. This can be accomplished by means such as dubbing, multilingual programming and subtitling that is age appropriate. When acquiring and broadcasting children's programmes the SABC takes children's language requirements into account. Further information on children's programmes is detailed in the Programming Policy.

DRAMA

Drama provides a unique means of telling our South African stories, and learning from and about one another. The SABC strives to broadcast top quality South African dramas that in combination include and reflect different South African languages and cultures. We also undertake to investigate innovative and creative ways of ensuring that such dramas are accessible to as wide a range of audiences as possible, such as multilingual productions, subtitling, and dubbing.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING, AND THE BLIND

The SABC is committed to responding to the broadcasting needs of all its audiences. Responding effectively to the needs of people with disabilities is an important part of our mandate. The SABC develops specific policies and implementation plans to facilitate access to its broadcasts for people with disabilities.

The broadcasting of programmes in South African Sign Language, as a recognised South African language, is one of the means of meeting the needs of people with hearing disabilities. While the broadcasting of Sign Language interpretation facilitates access to programming by the Deaf and hard of hearing, this also creates knowledge and understanding of South Africa's substantial Deaf and hard of hearing community, and so contributes to nation building.

The SABC progressively expands the amount of programming that is signed, beginning with selected news and current affairs, and events of national importance. Special efforts are being made to provide Sign Language interpretation when programmes are recorded in front of live audiences. Such efforts facilitate the participation of people from the Deaf and hard of hearing communities in such programmes.

In meeting the broadcasting needs of South Africa's blind communities, the SABC undertakes to investigate the use of innovative technologies such as audio-description.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

The SABC acknowledges that it is faced with limited air time and other broadcasting resources. In order to achieve its language broadcasting objectives, the SABC undertakes to achieve fair and equitable allocation of financial and other resources when commissioning and airing programmes in the official languages.

UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS

The Broadcasting Act requires that, as circumstances permit, a range of programmes in South Africa's official languages should be extended to all South Africans. The SABC undertakes to pursue this objective with regard to television, through its Universal Service and Access Policy.

RESEARCH

The needs and demographics of our language communities are continually changing and evolving. Since the SABC is committed to serving the broadcasting needs of these communities, it undertakes to research these needs regularly, and to ensure that such research informs its programming and scheduling strategies. The SABC also makes use of research to assess whether the strategies and innovations it implements meet audience expectations adequately.

TECHNOLOGY

The SABC recognises that technology offers innovative means of meeting the challenges of broadcasting in the country's official languages and South African Sign Language. The SABC therefore commits itself to undertaking relevant research into the creative use of technologies to facilitate implementation of its mandate.

TRAINING

The SABC recognises that compliance with its Language Broadcasting Policy outlined here will depend on the professionalism, competence, skills and commitment of its staff. Ongoing professional development of SABC staff is therefore be undertaken as a crucial part of the implementation of this policy. The SABC also assesses regularly the professional developmental needs arising out of implementation of this policy in order to develop appropriate professional developmental programmes.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The SABC recognises that it has a significant part to play in contributing to equitable treatment of all the official languages and South African Sign Language. It believes it can undertake its responsibilities effectively in collaboration with other organisations that have also been established to further these objectives, such as the Pan South African Language Board. The SABC therefore establishes mutually beneficial working relationships with such organisations to facilitate achievement of the Language Broadcasting Policy outlined in this document.

MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Language Broadcasting Policy lies at the core of our public service mandate as the public broadcasting service in South Africa. In order to ensure its implementation, the Board and management of the SABC have established specific appraisal and monitoring processes. The Board requires management to submit an annual three-year language action plan which identifies future goals arising from this policy. A summary of achievements of the previous year is also to be attached to the language action plan in order to facilitate a review of the achievements, opportunities and challenges.

The summary includes the following:

- An account of the air time allocated to each official language, including South Africa Sign Language, in each of the television programme genres
- A summary of the findings of any relevant research conducted





- A summary of professional developmental programmes undertaken to meet the competence and skills needs of implementing this policy
- A summary of investigations conducted into the use of technology, and the application of technologies to implement this language policy.

The SABC also undertakes to publish relevant parts of this information as part of the Corporation's Annual Report to Parliament.

REVIEW

This policy is reviewed by the SABC Board every five years.

³Nguni and Sesotho languages are recognised as being cognate languages

⁴For example English and Afrikaans are not cognate but home language speaker of one often understand the other. In addition, these languages are understood by members of other language communities.

⁵For example, XiTsonga and TshiVenda

POLICY ON UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS

INTRODUCTION

Historically the concepts of "universal access" and "universal service" have been applied to the telecommunications sector, where universal service obligations have been set for operators following deregulation and market liberalisation. The aim of these obligations (usually contained in licence conditions) has been to ensure that general public policy goals, including those of economic growth and social development, can be met in the context of competing demands for scarce resources, as countries privatise former monopolistic providers of basic or essential services. In the context of convergence, these concepts have sometimes been transplanted crudely into the broadcasting sector in an effort to ensure that deregulation and market liberalisation do not lead to a situation where people are deprived of access to essential services.

Application of the concepts of Universal Service and Access in the broadcasting sector begins from a different premiss from that of telecommunications. The 1998 White Paper on Broadcasting Policy said that the key goals of broadcasting policy were to ensure that policy intervention would redress past imbalances and "recognise the special character of language broadcasting and provide for technical parameters that suit the different languages". In terms of the Broadcasting Act, the SABC has to work towards making its services available throughout South Africa. Also, national policy is expected to "prioritise the provision of services in languages of choice where applicable". What the White Paper recognises is that "programming alone will not solve the problems of addressing all South African broadcasting needs. Access is a critical area that needs urgent address through appropriate policy intervention. In the area of signal distribution, the network and infrastructure must be extended to cover the entire country".

This document sets out a policy on Universal Service and Access for the SABC's broadcasting services. It aims to facilitate the provision of a comprehensive end-to-end public broadcasting service for all South Africans.

Since there is no definition of Universal Service and Access for broadcasting, this policy includes a definition of Broadcasting Universal Service and Access.

As a major player in the emerging knowledge-based economy and the global information society, the SABC has a crucial part to play in defining targets for achieving Broadcasting Universal Service and Access in South Africa, and indeed beyond our borders. This policy sets out general principles to guide planning and implementation of the SABC's operations. The aim is ultimately to develop a corporate action plan, with steps that can be achieved within specified periods, and is aligned with other SABC plans and policies.

CONTEXT OF THIS POLICY

The changes in the broadcasting industry, including technological changes, make it imperative for this policy to be flexible and dynamic. This will ensure that the uncertainty about future developments in the South African broadcasting sector do not discourage much needed future investment in the sector, nor hamper planning efforts to expand coverage and services.

What is certain for medium- to long-term planning, is that future recommendations and targets for Universal Service and Access will undoubtedly be made in the context of convergence. We may assume, then, that when questions of universal coverage in terms of signal distribution are raised, the means of transmission will be assessed so that the most technically appropriate and affordable solutions are adopted.

Legislation, regulations and public policy directives in the South African communications sector are already framed in the language of technological convergence, in which the general approach to regulation is based on a three-tier structure: networks, services and content. Regulatory developments in the highly industrialised regions of the world have already adapted to the needs of addressing convergence. They have also relied heavily on competition law to regulate transmission networks and trade in audiovisual products and services. Separate policies and

regulations have been developed to deal with the goals of cultural and social policy, including extension of public broadcasting services.

From a technological point of view, the developments in digital broadcasting technology will certainly help to shape this policy. Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) and Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) have not only revolutionised the transmission of radio and television signals, but introduced innovations such as in digital modulation techniques, wireless data transmission to mobile receivers, and frequency efficiency. Within this, a central concern is the extent to which the cost of digital receivers will become affordable over time. The main advantage of digital broadcasting, compared with analogue terrestrial broadcasting, is that a number of radio and television services are combined into a single digital data stream that is distributed to every transmitter in the network, making it possible to transmit several programmes in the space previously occupied by one service.

From the point of view of universal service, the key question is whether these advances in digital technology will help us to deliver affordable public broadcasting services, or merely add to the inequality in provision of services and widen the digital divide.

The policy and regulations that will determine future definitions of Universal Service and Access in South Africa in a fully digital broadcasting environment will almost certainly be instituted after an appreciable time. Those concepts, then, will have to evolve over time and in response to technological advances, market developments and changes in user demand.

On a wider scale, the government's e-strategy has yet to be finalised. The requirements of this strategy to achieve Universal Service and Access, as well as other initiatives aimed at bridging the digital divide and inducting South Africa into the Information Society, will determine the macro policy environment in which the SABC's policy will be further developed and refined.

The SABC's policy has been developed with these factors in mind, to ensure that it remains flexible, dynamic and responsive to such developments while providing direction and certainty for the SABC's operations.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The SABC's commitment to further Universal Service and Access extends across its portfolio of radio stations and television channels. However, the implementation of this policy will prioritise the gradual extension of public broadcasting services to everyone in the country.

BACKGROUND

Plans for future coverage will be built on what the SABC has already achieved in working towards Universal Service and Access. Those achievements are summarised below:

Since 1999, the SABC has extended the reach of its television services through these projects:

- Elimination of the SABC2-SABC3 switch in parts of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal increased the reach of SABC3 to 74.3% of the population.
- Expansion of SABC2 to Taung and Ganyesa
- Expansion of SABC3 in high-density metropolitan areas.

Most of these projects are the result of many years of planning and implementation since the SABC's universal service goals were set in the mid-1990's, based on the Independent Broadcasting Authority's Triple Inquiry report. The operation has involved complex, time-consuming, network and coverage planning, in conjunction with the signal distribution provider Sentech. In fact the process of expanding coverage, firstly of the SABC's African Language Stations, which began in 1995, was implemented only from 1998. That gives some idea of the time it takes to plan and implement effectively. It should be noted, though, that the process is also slowed by long delays in getting approval from local authorities and conducting environmental impact assessments before new transmitter sites can be established.

In 1999, coverage of the SABC television services was as follows:

- SABC1 - 82.81%
- SABC2 - 85.46%
- SABC3 - 71.86%

At present the SABC is expanding its networks. After expansion, coverage will be:

- SABC1 - 90%
- SABC2 - 91%
- SABC3 - 77%

For radio, the Independent Broadcasting Authority recommended in 1995, as part of its Triple Inquiry Report, that the 11 full-spectrum language services be upgraded to reach more speakers of their broadcasting languages. The SABC took up the challenge and made formal application to the Independent Broadcasting Authority for authorisation to expand the transmitter networks of those stations. The plans were approved on 19 May 1999, to be implemented in two phases.

The SABC moved quickly and phase 1, involving erecting additional transmitters at existing sites, was completed by 1 June 1999. This took radio to 1,2 million people who had not previously received a radio signal in their own language. Four radio stations benefited from this phase: Sesotho broadcaster Lesedi FM gained 300 780 potential listeners, Uhkozi FM (in isiZulu) gained 128 200, Ikwewezi FM (in isiNdebele) gained 86 318, and Ligwalagwala FM (in siSwati) gained 128 200.

The goal of phase 2 was to take an FM radio signal to areas that had not had access to one. This involved setting up 11 new transmitter sites housing 13 FM transmitters. The work began in March 2001 and to date has provided an additional 2,1 million potential listeners with FM radio. By the time it is completed, 3,5 million people will be able to tune in. In all, the two-phase plan will expand the FM network to reach 4 789 872 more people. Table 1 shows the percentage increase in the reach for all 11 radio stations.

SERVICE	BEFORE EXPANSION (AFTER INTEGRATION)	PRESENTLY*	GAIN
Ikwewezi FM	30%	67%	37%
Lesedi FM	73%	85%	13%
Ligwalagwala FM	34%	71%	37%
Motsweding FM	86%	86%	N/A
Munghana Lonene FM	84%	84%	N/A
Phalaphala FM	79%	79%	N/A
RSG	87%	87%	N/A
Safm	95%	95%	N/A
Thobela FM	73%	78%	5%
Ukhozi FM	69%	81%	12%
Umhlobo Wenene FM	79%	79%	N/A

Table 1: Coverage percentages for PBS radio. These figures include three transmitters approved by ICASA but not yet in operation. After integration refers to the integration of former TBVC broadcasters as follows: Radio Thoyandou into Phalaphala FM, Radio Mmbatho into Motsweding FM and Radio Transkei into Umhlobo Wenene FM.

In addition to the terrestrial expansion, the various SABC radio and television services are also available on the Vivid DTH satellite platform, throughout South Africa.



A DEFINITION OF UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS FOR BROADCASTING SERVICES

The SABC understands Broadcasting Universal Service and Access to mean:

"The provision of a range of audio and video broadcasting services to citizens throughout the Republic. The services shall include, but are not limited to, radio and television programmes that cater for information, cultural, religious and educational needs and are delivered via the most appropriate technical means available at an affordable cost to broadcasters and audiences alike."

AIMS FOR BROADCASTING UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS

The Triple Inquiry Report made a distinction between universal service obligations for radio and for television, and mandated the SABC to attend urgently to the problem of limited coverage and poor quality of the African language services, primarily through radio. The SABC's approach is that this distinction is still valid, and that using radio to extend unilingual programming in order to achieve Broadcasting Universal Service and Access should be retained as a policy goal in future. This principle should be extended gradually to television as the technical and financial means became available.

However, in implementing this policy the SABC does not want to replicate apartheid's social and geographical segregation patterns, with an apartheid of the airwaves, by simply maintaining the current provision of language-based services targeted only at those areas where most of the speakers of a language traditionally reside. This means that in implementing the policy we should not assume speakers of any of South Africa's official languages who still reside in the former "Bantustan" areas would choose to remain there, or would not commute. In fact, the current urbanisation trends demonstrate shifts in the demographic profile of people living in different parts of the country, and confirm the movement of people from rural to urban environments in search of improved economic prospects.

In this context, the SABC's planning for expansion of coverage takes account of relevant demographic data and urbanisation trends.

The SABC also has to consider how to prioritise the allocation of resources to extend coverage of the full range of public broadcasting services when, for instance, a huge investment in infrastructure results in reaching only a very few people at great expense, or provides a social but not a financial return. In each case, the extent of the proposed coverage, the number of people to be reached by the expansion, the extent of need of those people, the cost of the expansion, the nature of the service to be provided by the expansion, and frequency availability, amongst others, will determine the feasibility of investing in transmission extension. Against this backdrop, the SABC's aims for Broadcasting Universal Service and Access are as follows:

- The SABC's first aim as far as Universal Service and Access is concerned is to endeavour to ensure that all South Africans have access to a broadcasting service.
- A further aim is to ensure that a radio service in each official language, that provides a range of programmes, is available. Initially, this will be achieved by using the most affordable means of signal distribution to reach at least 80% of the speakers of each language.
- As a more long-term aim, the SABC will endeavour to ensure that audiences have access to a range of radio services in a variety of official languages.
- As far as television is concerned, the SABC will aim to ensure that at least two public service channels, providing a range of programming in a variety of official languages are available. Initially, this will be achieved by using the most affordable means of signal distribution to reach at least 90% of the population.

PRINCIPLES FOR ACHIEVING BROADCASTING UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS

In fulfilling these aims, the SABC shall be guided by the set of principles set out below.

Achieving Broadcasting Universal Service and Access is the responsibility of the South African broadcasting system as a whole.

The principle established in national policy, legislation and regulations is that achieving Universal Service and Access is not solely the SABC's responsibility. Policy pronouncements have, since the Independent Broadcasting Authority Triple Inquiry Report was released in 1995, and the White Paper on Broadcasting Policy in 1998, affirmed consistently that Universal Service and Access is the responsibility of the South African broadcasting system as a whole. This includes other categories of broadcasting licensees, such as commercial and community broadcasters, as well as signal distributors. In this regard, section 34(2)(b) reads: "the signal distribution sector must provide universal access for all South Africans to broadcast services".

The SABC's responsibility is to define its contribution to Broadcasting Universal Service and Access. The SABC therefore provides a regular report of its achievements against its stated aims.

The SABC also regularly liaises with other stakeholders who share the responsibility for extending Broadcasting Universal Service and Access: primarily Sentech, ICASA, the Department of Communications and the Universal Service Agency.

Achievement of Broadcasting Universal Service and Access is subject to the financial resources available.

Broadcasting legislation recognises that resources to finance provision of the public broadcasting services are limited. The principle established applies to both public service obligations and the achievement of Universal Service and Access. For instance, Section 3(4) of the Broadcasting Act of 1999, provides that "the broadcasting system as a whole must provide educational programming, and where such programming is provided by a dedicated education service, must be extended throughout the Republic within the financial resources". Regarding commercial services, Section 30(d) of the Broadcasting Act of 1999 provides that: "commercial broadcasting services, when viewed collectively, must within a reasonable period of time be extended to all South Africans and provide comprehensive coverage of the areas which they are licensed to serve". Another section of the Broadcasting Act that makes the provision of services conditional on availability of resources is section 3(6), which says: "a range of programming in the Republic's official languages must be extended to all South Africans as circumstances permit".


Likewise, the SABC's approach to achieving Broadcasting Universal Service and Access has to take account of the financial resources available. In this approach, the SABC should strive for economic efficiency while achieving the maximum in terms of service delivery targets. As the SABC migrates from analogue to digital, the financial implications of double illumination will need to be factored in our planning.

The SABC's approach takes cognisance of the approach to national development set out in the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) and Urban Renewal Programme (URP). Therefore aims have been set to guide planning and implementation that is co-ordinated to attain economic efficiency while achieving maximum impact on targets of service delivery. In practice, this would mean, for example, that as the roll-out of the electricity grid advanced, so detailed planning for expansion of TV coverage could be closely co-ordinated to occur as electricity became available.

The interoperability of systems and delivery platforms is key to achieving Broadcasting Universal Service and Access.

Optimal solutions for expansion of coverage promised by the advent of digital broadcasting, across any of the delivery platforms (satellite, terrestrial and cable), are technically possible and financially feasible only if the networks and operating systems are interoperable. This is not the case in South Africa at present.





In the short to medium term, the SABC's Broadcasting Universal Service and Access aims are to be met by using a combination of analogue and digital technologies. Adoption of a global standard for digital broadcasting throughout South Africa, to promote interoperability, mobility and end-to-end connectivity, would therefore be key to advancing the achievement of Broadcasting Universal Service and Access.

MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

As the need to achieve Broadcasting Universal Service and Access affects many areas of the SABC, the Board requires management to determine responsibility within the corporation for driving implementation of this policy.

The Board also requires management to submit an annual three-year action plan for Broadcasting Universal Service and Access, outlining goals and resources required. This would ensure that dynamic changes in the industry did not make plans redundant. It would also allow harnessing of technological developments to assist in the attainment of Broadcasting Universal Service and Access. A summary of the previous year's achievements should be attached to this plan, including:

- A report of the SABC's achievements on Broadcasting Universal Service and Access against the stated aims, including reasons for achieving or failing to achieve these
- A breakdown of the services extended in the previous year, including the increase in population coverage of those services and the cost of the expansion

Relevant aspects of these reports are included in the Corporation's Annual Report to Parliament.

REVIEW

This policy is reviewed by the SABC Board every five years.

⁶"A Telecommunications Universal Service Policy Framework for Defining Categories of Needy People in South Africa". Report prepared by DRA — Development. A. Stavrou and K.Mkhize, Dec.1977. This research informed the development of a policy framework for defining categories of needy people in South Africa who are also those not served by broadcasting services

POLICY ON LOCAL CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

As South Africa's public broadcaster, the SABC is firmly committed to supporting the South African music and production industries by airing local television programmes and South African music. The SABC believes that South African music and television content play a key part in reflecting and celebrating our country's diverse people and cultures. Given the neglect and degradation of many aspects of South African cultural expression in the past, local content on the public broadcaster helps to restore a sense of pride and dignity in local music, performance, film and the arts. This, in turn, assists in furthering important public interest goals such as nation-building and reconciliation.

The SABC also recognises that the broadcasting of local content on the public broadcaster can contribute to promoting growth of the music, production and associated cultural industries.

Nevertheless, the SABC's ability to broadcast high levels of local content is influenced by market dynamics within the local music and production industries. For instance, the music industry does not always consistently produce South African music across all the music formats. As far as television production is concerned, the cost of local material is usually significantly in excess of the costs for international programmes. In an environment where programming is funded primarily through advertising, there is also pressure on the SABC to screen material which will draw audiences and revenue.

This is the context in which the SABC operates, and within which it seeks to demonstrate its commitment to the broadcasting of local content. The objective of this policy is to outline those commitments.

REQUIREMENTS AND COMMITMENTS

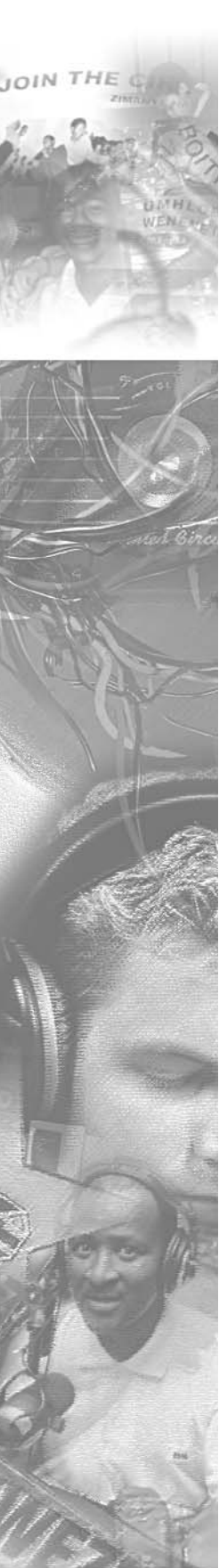
Various regulatory and legislative requirements applicable to the SABC in terms of local content were taken into account in developing this policy. They include the requirements of the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act, the Broadcasting Act, and relevant ICASA regulations. Specifically, the SABC has been guided by the following:

- The requirement that broadcasting services, viewed collectively, develop and protect national and regional identity, culture and character
- The obligation that the SABC take into account the needs of its audiences
- The requirement that the SABC display South African talent
- The requirement that the SABC reflect South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity
- The requirement that the SABC offer a plurality of views and a variety of news, analysis and information from a South African point of view
- The need to support the production of local content by South Africans and particularly by historically disadvantaged people
- The specific quotas set by ICASA for local television content, independent production and South African music on the SABC's public and commercial services.

In accordance with those obligations, the SABC commits itself to the following:

- To ensure that local television content is a significant and visible part of its schedules, throughout the broadcasting period and in prime time, in line with the quotas prescribed by ICASA
- To ensure that it commissions a significant amount of its local television content from the independent production industry, in line with the quotas prescribed by ICASA
- To continue to play a high level and wide variety of South African music across the SABC radio stations, in line with the quotas prescribed by ICASA.





SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The imperative to deliver significant levels of local content has a direct impact on all the SABC radio stations and television channels. These services are bound to comply with the ICASA regulations and licence conditions on local content. This Local Content Policy should be read together with those requirements and applies to all the SABC's radio and television services. The responsibility to comply with local content quotas rests with licensees — the radio stations and television channels. These platforms will prescribe and agree the proportions of local content with internal suppliers, including the content hub, news, education and sport.

The policy should be considered when the SABC:

- Develops strategic plans and/or Key Performance Indicators for the Corporation
- Develops business plans and budgets for the corporation and its services
- Formulates programme strategies, policies and plans for each station/channel.

TELEVISION

DEFINITION OF LOCAL TELEVISION CONTENT

Local television content is defined in the **Independent Broadcasting Authority Act**⁷ as a television programme (excluding broadcasts of sports events and compilations of them, advertisements, teletext and continuity announcements) that is produced by a South African broadcaster, or by South African people.

DEFINITION OF INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION

Also in the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act, an **independent production**⁸ is defined as a production of local television content by a person who is not employed directly or indirectly by a broadcaster, or by a person who is not controlled by, or in control of, any broadcasting licensee.

LOCAL CONTENT QUOTAS

Like all broadcasters, the SABC is bound by the local content and independent production quotas prescribed by ICASA. There are three sets of quotas for television:

- **Global local content** quotas for each television channel. These quotas stipulate that a percentage of the air time between 05:00 and 23:00 should be devoted to local content. The global quotas distinguish between public and commercial television.
- **Genre quotas.** These stipulate that if a television channel carries a certain genre of programming (such as drama), a percentage of that type of programming is to be devoted to local content. The different genres are defined in the ICASA regulations⁹ and span the following six areas: drama, informal knowledge building, childrens, education, documentary and current affairs. In each case a minimum percentage is prescribed. These quotas also distinguish between public and commercial television.
- **Independent production quotas.** Here the stipulation is that a percentage of the total amount of local content aired must be devoted to independent television productions. These quotas make no distinction between public and commercial services.

All the quotas are laid out in regulations which may be reviewed by ICASA every three years.

COMPLIANCE WITH QUOTAS

It is the responsibility of each television channel to ensure that they comply with the local content quotas. Scheduling Managers within the channels forward their schedules to the Policy and Regulatory Affairs Department on a monthly basis. Policy and Regulatory Affairs works with the channels to ensure that there is consistency in the designation and measurement of local content and that there is adequate forecasting to identify any potential difficulties in meeting the quotas.

Policy and Regulatory Affairs consolidates the information received from channels and compiles it into reports which are submitted to top management. Annual local content compliance figures are published in the Corporation's Annual Report to Parliament.

THE SABC'S APPROACH TO LOCAL CONTENT ON TELEVISION

The following principles underpin the SABC's approach to local content on television:

- In line with the distinction between commercial and public service channels made by ICASA, the most significant delivery of local content is on the SABC's public service channels. The SABC believes it is appropriate for the public service channels in its portfolio to have the most significant commitment to airing local material.
- The SABC is committed to broadcasting a range of good quality local productions. This means that the television portfolio as a whole airs local content in a variety of genres and programme types, targeted at different audiences. Taken collectively across the SABC's television portfolio, this content should reflect South Africa's diversity of people, provinces, languages, cultures and religions, while also being aligned to the needs of the audience.
- The SABC is also aware that historically there has been a lack of good quality local material in African languages. It is a dual objective of this policy and of the Language Broadcasting Policy that local African language programming is seen on our public service television channels.
- The SABC is eager to support the development of television content on the African content and, if possible, will endeavour to showcase such material, particularly on its public service channels.
- The SABC recognises that a productive and thriving relationship with the independent production sector is essential for the broadcasting of good quality local content. As part of its commitment to strengthening the relationship with this sector, the SABC is publishing a separate policy and procedures on the Procurement of Local Content, which details the SABC's policy and procedures for commissioning and acquiring local material. This policy also outlines the SABC's approach to supporting Black Economic Empowerment in the production industry which the SABC has identified as an important objective.
- The SABC recognises that it is the industry's biggest investor in skills development. Aligned to the SABC's investment in local content is a commitment to invest in empowerment and skills development processes that benefit the industry at large.
- The SABC strives to engage more fruitfully with partner organisations in the film and television industry in order to support development and transformation of the local production industry.

RADIO

DEFINITION OF SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC

South African music is defined in the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act. In order to qualify as South African music, a musical work must meet two of the following criteria:

- The lyrics are written by a South African citizen
- The music is composed by a South African citizen
- The music and/or lyrics are performed principally by musicians who are South African citizens
- The musical work is a live performance recorded wholly in South Africa, or performed wholly in South Africa, and broadcast live in South Africa.

QUOTAS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC

The SABC's music stations (those that devote more than 15% of their air time to music) are bound to comply with the South African music quotas prescribed by ICASA. These quotas stipulate that a percentage of the tracks played between 05:00 and 23:00 are to be South African. A distinction is made between public service and commercial radio. The quotas are reviewed by ICASA every three years.

COMPLIANCE WITH QUOTAS

It is the responsibility of each radio station to ensure that they comply with the local content quotas applicable to them. They are assisted by the SABC's Policy and Regulatory Affairs department in reporting their compliance to ICASA. Monthly compliance reports are made to top management, and annual figures are published in the Corporation's Annual Report to Parliament.



POLICY ON RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING

INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a multicultural and multifaith society that is united by a common humanity and moral order. Within its diversity there are human values that call for the promotion of social harmony, national healing, reconciliation, social reconstruction and nation building.

Most South Africans acknowledge the Divine, which is expressed through a variety of religious beliefs, practices and religious institutions. As the public broadcaster, the SABC has an obligation to provide religious programmes and to broadcast religious material in a manner that is unbiased and representative of South Africa's religious plurality. In so doing, the SABC seeks to promote religious respect among the country's different religious groups.

The SABC's religious programming should therefore reflect a mix of South Africa's major religions, while allowing expression for those religions that do not have an extensive following. For the purposes of this policy, major religions are understood to include Christianity, African Religion, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism.

In its religious programming, the SABC seeks to correct gender, racial, religious and resource allocation imbalances associated with religious broadcasting in the past. Further, it seeks to ensure that the distinctive identities of the religious traditions are broadcast in a way that facilitates the religious and moral objectives of justice, social harmony and the common good. Religious programming should play a meaningful part in the moral regeneration of South Africa.

Religious broadcasting should be undertaken in accordance with values that include:

- Sensitivity to the diverse nature of South African society and the need for justice, healing and reconciliation
- Compassion and concern for human dignity and for all life, including the earth
- A common South Africanness
- Integrity, transparency and trust in all relationships
- Commitment to the independence and autonomy of the SABC, within the parameters of its accountability to the South African public
- A spirit of co-operation between the SABC and the religious community.

NATURE AND CONTENT OF RELIGIOUS PROGRAMMES

The following principles underpin the SABC's approach to religious programming:

- In fulfilling its religious programming mandate, the SABC provides both faith specific and multifaith programmes. Faith specific programmes should give the major religious groups the scope to celebrate their life of faith and understanding of the Divine in all fullness and without censure. Multifaith programmes should promote religious dialogue, respect and understanding among all the religious groupings in South Africa. The vehicles for delivery of religious programmes are the radio stations and TV channels in the SABC's public broadcasting portfolio.
- Whereas religious broadcasts have necessarily to comply with the SABC's Policy on Programming, the SABC takes particular care to ensure that in such programmes there is sensitivity to the beliefs of others, and that no religion is either attacked or undermined in such programmes.
- Religious broadcasting may not be used to solicit funds, nor to support any programme of a political or ideological nature. Permission for fundraising, whether for emergency relief and/or social welfare, or for religious causes, should be obtained from the SABC before the broadcast.
- The theological content of meditational and worship programmes is at the discretion of the presenter, as a member of a particular religious organisation, but should comply with the Policy on Religious Broadcasting and other relevant SABC policies.





- The format of religious programmes and the choice of presenters should meet the technical, creative and professional criteria required by the SABC.
- The SABC provides religious programmes in a variety of formats including documentaries, magazines and actuality programmes. The aim of these is to encourage religious comment on matters of national concern, and to introduce people to faiths practised in South Africa and, where appropriate, elsewhere.
- The SABC sources religious programmes through its standard content procurement procedures including commissioning, licensing and /or content which may be acquired at no cost to the Corporation or the supplier.
- Religious broadcasting should strive to be contextual and relevant, and to reflect our African reality. Towards further correction of the neglect of African culture in the public media, special attention is given to African Religion and traditional cultures.
- Religious programmes should take account of regional factors, target audiences, language and cultural preferences, and the devotional needs of specific groups.

ALLOCATION OF TIME

The SABC has limited air time available and, in addition to religious programming, has to provide a wide range of public interest programmes in its schedules. Despite these constraints, the SABC is committed to offering meaningful and sufficient religious programming on its radio and television services.

In allocating air time to religious groups, the SABC is committed to the principle of fairness and applies this principle in determining the time allocated to each group. These allocations are made on a three-yearly basis, after consultation with the Religious Broadcasting Panel (RPB), taking the following into account:

- Data on the percentage of the population in each religious group, as per the available Census information
- The need for each of the major religions to enjoy meaningful and sufficient programming of a faith specific nature
- The need for all the religions to be reflected in religious programmes
- The need for sufficient programming of a multifaith nature
- The need to redress past imbalances in religious broadcasting

SCHEDULING

Religious programmes should not be confined to Sundays, or the fringes of the programme schedules, but be placed at times when audiences are available and be broadcast on days appropriate to individual religions.

PAID BROADCASTING

In addition to its normal provision of religious programmes, the SABC may make air time available for purchasing by religious groups for broadcasting of religious material. The sale of such air time would be negotiated on a commercial basis and be guided by the following:

- The sale of air time to religious groups may in no way detract from the SABC's mandate to provide religious programming.
- The sale of air time to particular religious groups should be consistent with the time allocations for those groups, as determined annually. Within this, the SABC shall also ensure that there is a fair representation of various denominations in religious groups.
- Religious material broadcast during slots that have been sold to religious groups is always to be consistent with the SABC's Policy on Religious Broadcasting and all the other relevant policies. The SABC reserves the right to accept or reject an offer to purchase air time based on the material proposed.

- In considering offers to purchase air time, the SABC gives preference to good quality local material.
- Profits from the sale of air time to religious groups should be directed to the funding of religious programmes.
- The scheduling of such air time is the prerogative of the SABC.
- Sponsorship, fundraising, advertising and commercial branding in air time sold to religious groups is governed by the rules of SABC Airtime Sales.
- Operational Guidelines will be developed to guide transactions on air time sales. These operational guidelines shall be available on request.

RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING PANEL

The SABC's approach to religious programming is informed by the advice of the RBP, a body appointed by the SABC Board and representative of South Africa's religious community.

The RBP is nominated by the religious community and appointed by the Board. The appointments are made on the basis of public interviews conducted by a selection committee appointed by the Board and in accordance with the SABC's Corrective Action Policy. In addition to the Chairperson, who sits on the Board, the RBP consists of at least fifteen people drawn from various religious groups and includes professional advisers. There are at least two members from each of the five major religions in South Africa. Senior management from both radio and television represent SABC management at RBP meetings.

The RBP's term of office is two years and may be extended only once. Members who are unable to complete their term of office are replaced immediately as per the appointment criteria outlined above.

The relationship between the RBP, the Board, management and the religious community should be one of co-operation, while recognising that SABC Board carries the final responsibility for matters of policy.

The mandate of the RBP is to promote co-operation between the SABC and the religious groups in the country. Further, the RBP advises the SABC specifically on:

- Reviewing of SABC Religious Broadcasting Policy, including the composition of the RBP and how it is appointed
- Liaison with religious communities
- Time allocations for the religious groups in both faith specific and multifaith programmes.

Members of the RBP are entitled to an honorarium as approved by the Board and are reimbursed for subsistence, travelling and accommodation expenses.

REVIEW

This policy is reviewed by the SABC Board every five years.





POLICY ON EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING

INTRODUCTION

The broadcasting of educational programmes forms a core part of the implementation of the SABC's public service mandate. The SABC is required by legislation to inform, educate and entertain viewers and listeners.

The SABC recognises that to right the wrongs made by decades of apartheid education on the knowledge, literacy and skills profile of South Africa requires the collective contributions of all educational authorities, institutions and individuals. The SABC recognises that through broadcasting, it can make a unique contribution to this common national project. Outside of schools, colleges, higher education institutions and work place training, radio and television can make the most significant additional contribution to learning.

The SABC also recognises that an informed and educated citizenry is an important foundation for the sustained development of South Africa. The SABC recognises that through its educational programmes it is well placed to advance national goals of human dignity, equality and the establishment of an inclusive society.

In fulfilling its educational mandate, the SABC is guided by the Constitutionally enshrined right of all South Africans to receive education — in the official languages of their choice, where reasonably practicable. The SABC is also committed to achieving the aims set in the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act and the Broadcasting Act, and the relevant policies and regulations. In particular, we take into account the requirement of the Broadcasting Act that the SABC's public broadcasting services should:

"include significant amounts of educational programming, both curriculum-based and informal educative topics from a wide range of social, political and economic issues, including, but not limited to, human rights, health, early childhood development, agriculture, culture, justice and commerce and contributing to a shared South African consciousness and identity".

This Policy on Educational Broadcasting sets out the framework within which the SABC implements this mandate and responds to the national literacy and skills development challenge.

OBJECTIVES

The SABC commits itself to the following objectives for educational broadcasting:

- To provide a range of innovative and quality educational programmes across our television and radio services, aimed at meeting the diverse formal and informal learning needs of all our audiences, including children, the youth and adults. Such programmes include:
 - Programmes that support the curriculum-based activities of the education and training sectors and which cover a wide range of subjects and fields
 - Programmes that promote public education on rural development and urban renewal, human resources development, citizens' rights and responsibilities, healthy living, innovative solutions to personal, family and community challenges, national identity, culture and heritage promotion and the promotion of democratic citizenship.
- To ensure that the radio and television services in the SABC's public broadcasting portfolio dedicate adequate air time to educational programmes that are scheduled at times that are appropriate for the target audiences.
- To ensure that the radio and television services in the commercial portfolio support a culture of lifelong learning through informal knowledge-building initiatives that are relevant to their format and target audience.

- To provide educational programmes in various of the official languages and, in selected genres, Sign Language, taking into account the language needs of each target audience.
- To broadcast a significant amount of locally produced educational programming, recognising that such programmes often best reflect and meet the educational needs in our country. However, the SABC also recognises that it is important to expand audiences' knowledge of the African continent and the rest of the world, and will accordingly ensure that internationally acquired programmes fulfil these goals.
- To implement a coherent education methodology that incorporates a multimedia approach with the use of print, the Internet, satellite, fixed and mobile telephone networks and SMS. Such multimedia strategies are intended to enhance the effectiveness of educational programmes.
- To supplement educational methodologies through outreach programmes, where appropriate, in the form of training and support for users of materials aimed at deepening the educational impact of the content.
- To ensure that sufficient resources are dedicated to implement the education mandate. To this end the SABC raises financial and other resources from a variety of sources, including government, licence fees, private and international donors, advertising and sponsorship, co-productions and related programme partnerships with a range of national, continental and international institutions.

KEY PRINCIPLES

The SABC is guided by the following principles:

- The SABC ensures that educational broadcasting is relevant and appealing to targeted audiences and sensitively reflects the diverse experiences and needs of all South Africans.
- The SABC ensures that its educational programmes address imbalances in the historical provision of education, especially, but not exclusively, those based on race, gender and disability.
- The SABC links its educational broadcasting to national priorities and needs. In this regard, the SABC supports the achievement of outcomes-based education, lifelong learning, and the linking of educational and life experiences.
- The SABC builds strategic partnerships that enable it to provide an effective educational broadcasting intervention.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The SABC radio stations and channels are required to comply with any relevant legislation, regulations and licence conditions, regarding the provision of educational programmes. Additionally, this Policy on Educational Broadcasting should be read together with the other relevant editorial policies including the Programming Policy, the Language Broadcasting Policy, and the Universal Service and Access Policy.

This Policy on Educational Broadcasting is considered when the SABC:

- Develops strategic plans and budgets for the Corporation to meet its education mandate
- Produces or commissions educational programmes or multimedia content
- Develops schedules for channels and stations
- Procures any international educational material.

Any independent producers and consultants contracted to produce educational material for the SABC should be made aware of this policy.





GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- The SABC ensures that its services, in combination, air a significant amount of educational programmes that meet with the objectives outlined in this policy.
- The SABC submits to Board an annual three-year action plans that identifies education priorities for each of the educational mandate areas (outlined below). When necessary, these strategies are drafted in consultation with educational stakeholders. Achievement of these strategic plans is evaluated annually, where necessary in conjunction with education stakeholders.
- At least one of the SABC's television channels screens programmes specifically in support of the primary and secondary school curricula. This is supplemented by programmes on public broadcasting radio stations.
- The SABC ensures that educational programmes are scheduled at times that are suitable for the target audiences.
- All the educational programmes have clear goals. Such goals and expected outcomes are established before the production, commissioning or acquisition of any educational programme.
- The SABC's educational broadcasting business unit, together with responsible commissioning editors and executive producers, is tasked with ensuring that these outcomes are achieved through creative and innovative programming.

PROGRAMMING GUIDELINES

- Educational programmes should conform to the highest broadcasting standards. They should utilise a wide range of programme formats designed to ensure that the aim of the programme is achieved creatively and is appropriate to the subject matter and target audience.
- Educational programmes should utilise innovative technologies and techniques (including dubbing, multilingual programming, subtitling) in order to increase the effectiveness and understandability of programmes in different language communities
- All the educational programmes should be challenging and informative, aim to promote a culture of learning and teaching, and support the drive for life-long learning. The basic tenet of all the educational programmes is to seek to impart knowledge and problem-solving skills, promote critical thinking and, when necessary, assist in changing attitudes and behaviour.
- Educational programmes should relate to the personal circumstances of the viewers and listeners, and seek to impart the knowledge and skills that would help people to change their circumstances for the better.
- Educational programming should, if appropriate, assist in fostering a harmonious relationship between South Africans and the environment, and promote sustainable development.
- Educational programmes comply with all the SABC editorial policies, including those on portrayal and stereotyping of people, violence, and the classification and scheduling of programmes. Educational programmes should not only seek to avoid stereotypes based, for example, on race, ethnicity and disability, but to challenge proactively any stereotype or bias, and so assist in changing attitudes.
- Educational programming should utilise a range of subject experts and interviewees, who are, for example, of different races, genders and physical abilities, and hold differing views, in order to reflect our diverse society.

EDUCATIONAL MANDATE AREAS

Arising from the Broadcasting Act, the SABC has identified, the following educational programme areas:

- Early Childhood Development
- Children at Home
- Formal Education
- Youth Development
- Adult and Human Resources Development
- Public Education.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Programmes for early childhood development are aimed at supporting the holistic development of young children (from 0 - 7). The SABC recognises that as relatively few South African children have access to any structured early childhood education, these programmes assist in preparing young children "to be ready to learn". Educational programming also supports the implementation of the national Grade R (Reception Year) curriculum. Moreover, this programming will equip caregivers with the knowledge and skills to facilitate and support the growth and development of young children.

Early childhood development programmes should meet the following standards:

- Be entertaining and actively engage the audience
- Develop children's self-esteem
- Enhance listeners' and viewers' imagination
- Reflect the personal experiences and cultures of the audience
- Affirm children's sense of self and place
- Take account of language needs and the needs of learners with disabilities
- Be primarily focused on health, nutrition and safety

CHILDREN AT HOME

Educational programming for children at home is aimed at children of school going age who are not at school, and seeks to create the space for children to engage and express their thoughts and opinions on issues that affect them.

Educational programming for children at home is required to meet the following standards:

- Be entertaining, enabling children to learn, have fun and interact with others
- Take account of language needs and the needs of learners with disabilities
- Promote healthy living, social awareness, self-esteem and an understanding of human rights
- Be primarily focused on science, technology, mathematics, economics and communication.

FORMAL EDUCATION

Formal educational programmes affirm and support the development of Foundation Phase learners (ages 5-9) and Intermediate Phase learners (ages 9-13).

Formal education programming is required to meet the following standards:

- It should support the implementation of the national school curriculum by providing quality resources developed specifically to assist both teachers and learners achieve nationally set outcomes.
- It should enhance learning in all curriculum learning areas: literacy, numeracy and life skills (Foundation Phase), and languages, mathematics, social sciences, arts and culture, life orientation, natural sciences and technology (Intermediate Phase).
- Educational programming should also take account of learners' language needs, including the language needs of deaf learners.





YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Youth development educational programmes are aimed at promoting a culture of life-long learning among young people, both at and after school.

Youth educational programming is required to meet the following standards:

- Programming should strive to develop self-esteem amongst listeners and viewers and provide a platform for expression by the youth.
- Programming should contextualise young people's realities, fears, concerns and needs.
- Programming should showcase youth solving problems, thinking critically, acting independently, developing creatively — intellectually, socially, cognitively and emotionally and addressing, overcoming and transforming their future.
- Programming should create an awareness of the rights and responsibilities of all citizens, including the youth, as contained in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution.

ADULT AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Adult and human resources development programmes affirm the concept of life-long learning, and support development of the skills and knowledge needed for survival in a competitive and ever-evolving world. Programmes are aimed at meeting the formal and informal skills development needs of both the employed and the unemployed, and support South Africans in their occupational endeavours. Programmes include adult literacy, skills development, educator development and entrepreneurial skills development.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Public educational programmes are aimed at offering the information, knowledge and skills South Africans need for effective participation and interaction in society. They promote the drive for life-long learning, and foster tolerance and understanding of one another and all our cultures. Such programmes enable people to make informed decisions, encourage critical thinking, and impart problem solving skills.

RESEARCH

The SABC continually evaluates the impact of its educational programmes. Research is conducted to assess audience needs and to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes. This includes audience research (e.g. to establish people's needs) and formative and summative research to understand the contribution of programming to audiences' development.

REVIEW

This policy is reviewed by the SABC Board every five years.