



government communications

Department:
Government Communication & Information System
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries: Michael Currin, Tel: (012) 314 2189, Email: michael@gcis.gov.za

The Chairperson
Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Communications
70 Kantor Street
Office No 5
Lydenburg

Att: The Honourable Eric Kholwane

07 March 2012

Dear Mr Kholwane (MP)

REPORT ON THE OVERSIGHT VISIT BY THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS TO LIMPOPO 5 - 8 FEBRUARY 2012.

1. Purpose

To provide feedback to the Portfolio Committee on Communications (PCC) on matters identified during the oversight visit to Limpopo province as per request of the Honourable Chairperson.

2. Background

The PCC undertook an Oversight visit to state entities/institutions which fall within their mandate in Limpopo province between the 5 - 8 February 2012. The state entities which were present during the visit are the following; GCIS, Post Office SA, USAASA, SENTENCH, ICASA, SABC and MDDA.

During the visit the following sites were visited:

1. Lulekani Post Office
2. Selwane Thusong Service Center (still in establishment phase)
3. Bulamahlo Thusong Service Center and Telecenter
4. Tzaneen Community Radio Station
5. Moletsi Community Radio Station
6. Nhluvuko News
7. Sentech Regional Office
8. SABC
9. Ngulu News
10. Sekhukhune Community Radio Station.

During the oversight visit at Bulamahlo Thusong Service Centre, the Committee felt that GCIS should compile a report on the functionality of the center, challenges as presented by the Acting Centre Manager and what GCIS has done to address the challenges.

Furthermore, a plan on how the challenges will be resolved should also be provided.

3. Legislative mandate

The PCC is a Parliamentary Committee constituted by the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa to conduct oversight on behalf of Parliament. The Constitution further states that Parliament has the power to conduct oversight of all organs of state, including those at provincial and local government level.

Parliament and its committees have powers to summon any person or institution to give evidence or produce documents, and to report them which includes Government Communications (GCIS).

Similarly, the Thusong Service Centers Business Plan 2006-2014 as approved by Cabinet in 2006 describes Thusong Service Centres as one-stop centres providing integrated services and information from government, to communities close to where they live as part of a comprehensive strategy to better their lives.

GCIS Strategic Plan for 2011-2014 indicates that the Government and Stakeholder Engagement Branch is responsible for the coordination of the roll-out of the Thusong Service Centre programme as part of the overall government-wide access strategy and also for the overall implementation and monitoring of the communication strategy.

Furthermore, GCIS is also responsible for the coordination of oversight role to the **MDDA** to ensure that the transfer payment made to the public entity enables it to carry out operations in promoting local media development and diversity. It enables historically disadvantaged communities and individuals to gain access to the media, and create an enabling environment for media development and diversity.

Cc: Minister Collins Chabane, MP, Minister in Presidency: Performance Monitoring , Evaluation and Administration

4. Key issues/challenges and plan to address them (Bulamahlo Thusong Service Center)

Issue raised	Challenges	Proposed interventions	Responsibility	Time frame
<p>1. Ownership of the center which is leading to the current civil society owner being unable to sustain the buildings</p>	<p>Not all centres operationalized in the first generation (pre-2006) were located in government owned buildings. Partnerships with civil society and community organisations were also part of the process of establishing Thusong Centres.</p> <p>Currently, for instance, the Bulamahlo Thusong Service Centre is one of these and the building is owned by Bulamahlo Projects, an NGO. No agreement between the Greater Tzaneen Municipality and the NGO has been reached in terms of ownership and there is an impasse between all parties on this matter requiring a meeting to address this.</p>	<p>Schedule a meeting between the Bulamahlo Projects and the Municipality which aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the nature of the partnership which needs to exist between the government and this NGO considering that the Provincial Department of Sports, Arts and Culture has already constructed a multi-purpose complex in close proximity to the centre which can serve as a Thusong Service Centre and to which government service providers can adequately relocate. To resolve outstanding lessor/lessee relations which are currently strained. 	<p>Office of the Premier which chairs the Provincial Inter Sectoral Steering Committee and GCIS.</p>	<p>31 March 2012</p>
<p>2. Funding</p>	<p>Funding challenges</p>	<p>Financial sustainability for the centre linked to the above as all service providers other than the GCIS are not paying rent.</p>	<p>Centre management. Office of the Premier and Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>3. Road signage and</p>	<p>No road signage to the center</p>	<p>Installation of road signage to the center.</p>	<p>Department of Roads and Transport.</p>	<p>Office of the Premier and GCIS to meet with Department of Roads</p>

Issue raised	Challenges	Proposed interventions	Responsibility	Time frame
branding				and Transport to determine the installation date. This must be completed by end of May 2012 given that the GCIS has an allocation from National Treasury for this.
4. Late coming by some service providers	This happened during the festive season by SAPS as they had to attend to operations on the field before coming to the Centre.	<p>Schedule of visiting times and delays placed on door signs so that beneficiaries of public services are aware of service providers' whereabouts henceforth.</p> <p>Adherence to Batho Pele principles will be carefully monitored by the Local Inter Sectoral Steering Committee and the Provincial Inter Sectoral Steering Committee.</p> <p>The Acting Centre Manager must escalate reports of poor performance/ attendance to the Provincial Inter Sectoral Steering Committee and GCIS Limpopo.</p>	Centre manager and affected service providers.	31 March 2012
5. Local Inter Sectoral Steering Committee functionality and management of the Center	Local Inter Sectoral Steering Committee not functional and this means that there is no regular meetings or planned interface between all key stakeholders from inside and outside government to ensure the effective functioning of the Centres.	The Local Inter Sectoral Steering Committee has been revived and its first meeting was held on the 24 February 2012.	Office of the Premier, GCIS, Acting Centre Manager and Greater Tzaneen Municipality	Local Intersectoral Steering Committee meetings on monthly basis.

Issue raised	Challenges	Proposed interventions	Responsibility	Time frame
6. Signing of Lease Agreement	Service providers, except for GCIS have not signed the Lease Agreement.	The Local Inter Sectoral Steering Committee meeting of the 24 th February 2012 resolved that the municipality will facilitate the signing of lease agreements and service level agreements.	Greater Tzaneen municipality. Office of the Premier to monitor progress and take remedial action where departments are defaulting.	31 March 2012
7. Centre managers forum	No platform to share challenges and successes.	Process in place to establish center manager's forum as resolved during the Centre Managers training in Bloemfontein held in 2011. Best practices in other provinces already exist and can be emulated in Limpopo.	Office of the Premier, GCIS Limpopo, GCIS National, Center Managers in the province.	30 June 2012
8. Lack of ICT infrastructure	Although the ICT blue print has been roll-out at the Center, Home Affairs is unable to print birth certificates at the Centre.	Home Affairs capability to print documents at the center like birth certificates.	Home Affairs working with the DPSA and SITA. Office of the Premier to monitor that this is corrected and GCIS Limpopo to report progress.	31 March 2012
9. Telkom landline	GCIS and Municipality do not have landlines due to cable theft.	Optic fibre connected by Telkom and affected institutions to re-apply their landlines.	Telkom to report on repair process	31 March 2012

5. Other critical issues identified

5.1. Tzaneen Community Radio Station

The station manager raised the matter of payment delays by GCIS National office which sometimes take up to sixty (60) days before payment is done.

It is however not true that GCIS takes up to 60 days. GCIS has looked at recent payments and they have all been less than 30 days after receiving the invoice, for example:

Programme	Invoice received	Payment date
Phone in programme for the Department of Rural Development	23/07/2011	17/8/2011
Adverts on climate change	23/07/2011	18/08/2011
Live broadcast for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries	27/7/2011	25/08/2011
Phone in programme for the Auditor General	28/7/2011	18/08/2011

GCIS has five programmes where Greater Tzaneen Community Radio has not submitted their invoices, these are:

- Phone in Program on Military Veterans database for Department of Military Veterans (29 November 2011)
- Adverts on Green paper for Department of Rural Development (06-31st December)
- Adverts on Safer festive season campaign for SAPS (December 2011)
- Adverts on Protected trees for Department of Agriculture (25 - 30 January 2012).

It should be noted that as long as invoices are not submitted with proof of flighting to the GCIS, the organization will not be able to make the necessary payments, which is the case with Tzaneen Community Radio Station.

5.2. Sekhukhune Community Radio Station

There was a great concern from members of Parliament that the MDDA refers Community Radio Stations to Sound Fusion.

The MDDA has never referred any beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries to Sound Fusion or any other private sector signal distribution service provider. Given the challenges MDDA has experienced in the past with stations inability to provide their own signal distribution, the MDDA has entered into an agreement with Sentech wherein the MDDA makes budgetary provisions for stations signal distribution costs which are done through Sentech. The MDDA grant funding cycle and policy states that for any procurement by beneficiaries of R2 000 and above, such must be accompanied by three quotations. In the Sekhukhune FM case, the station requested support for transmission equipment which they purchased from Sound Fusion.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the PCC

1. Notes the report as presented
2. Notes the proposed interventions in dealing with issues and challenges at the Bulamahlo Thusong Service Centre (as covered in 4)
3. Notes responses on the delayed payments at the Tzaneen Community Radio Station (as covered in 5.1)
4. Notes responses on the use of Sound Fusion by MDDA at Sekhukhune Community Radio Station (as covered in 5.2)
5. Notes that an update report will be provided at the end of May 2012.

Compiled by Thanyani Ravhura

Provincial Director GCIS Limpopo

Date: 28 February 2012



South African Broadcasting Corporation

Office of the Provincial General Manager
Limpopo

19 Hospital Street, Polokwane, 0699
PO Box 395, Polokwane, 0700
Tel: +27 15 290 0268/9
Fax: +27 15 290 0178
Fax to email: 086 540 1986
ravhuanzwov@sabc.co.za / mabilanep@sabc.co.za
www.sabc.co.za

21 February 2012

The Chairperson

Honorable S. E. Kholwane MP

Portfolio Committee on Communications

Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

Honorable S. E. Kholwane MP

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY STAFF ON 7 FEBRUARY 2012

Question 1

Provinces not treated equally compared to Head Office?

Answer:

The issues of salary scale disparities are historical; however Human Capital Services has been tasked with the responsibility of addressing the matter. It is indeed acknowledged that disparities are in evidence but the matter is receiving attention, and should be resolved in the new fiscal.

Question 2

Present building is dilapidated?

Answer:

The Province has noted that the building was a project set out in 1974 and indeed is old enough to receive regular facelift. The building is not entirely dilapidated but faces the urgent need for expansion in order to accommodate the growing number of employees. The corporation has decided to implement a faced-in approach in order to increase the space needed. Initial plans have been approved by the News department and the province continues to address this serious matter which was not anticipated when the building came into being, set to accommodate only 50 people as compared to the present 293.

Question 3

Some Managers save money by offering lower salaries to freelancers?

Answer:

This allegation was investigated but could not be substantiated. Managers continue to pay staff both permanent and freelancers the amount based on the signed contract.

Question 4

Some qualified freelancers earning lower salaries compared to those who are not qualified?

Answer:

Based on the experience and the expertise required this is common practice across industries. It is acknowledged that the corporation is paying its employees the agreed rate as per Policy, and would not discriminate against those who add value simply because they are seen not to have certain degrees held by others. The corporation endeavor to pay salaries that are commensurate with the discharge of each individual in the areas they are deployed. Educational qualifications are an important part of the decisions to employ staff, as it will be evidenced by the draft advert, but the SABC is cognisant of the skills required in order to discharge certain duties and therefore the possibility exist that some people, irrespective of their educational qualifications will indeed earn more than those classified as educationally advantaged.

Question 5

Some Managers do not follow procedures during recruitment process?

Answer:

To date records provide evidence that all recruitment processes within the Province followed all protocols, and there is no proof at least available to the provincial management that suggests otherwise.

Question 6

Telkom be spoken for provision of infrastructure to allow broadcast from rural places?

Answer:

To date, depending on the availability of financial resources Telkom does indeed provide satellite infrastructure for the purposes of broadcasting from rural areas. The SABC had to deal with competing interests for resources owing to the prevailing financial obligations, however should it be required, Telkom has always provided the requisite infrastructure.

Question 7

Some Senior Managers in Auckland Park interfere with Assignment Editor's job for the purpose of providing favors for some politicians?

Answer:

Such activities have not found home and space in the Province, and as such we are not competent to either confirm or refute the allegations.

Question 8

PBS radios allocated 1 hour for talk shows whereas they are meant to deal with developmental matters?

Answer:

ICASA has imposed some mandatory obligations on all PBS stations commonly known as License Conditions and these are meant to be achieved. In the main all programming and scheduling matters are the competency of the stations. Each year all strategic and operational matters regarding programming are signed off by Senior Management, however they too are prepared to listen to any suggestions that might enhance the integrity of the services rendered.

Question 9

What is the SABC's plan for marginalized languages on TV?

Answer:

The Corporation is hoping that the roll out of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) will greatly enhance the opportunities for other languages to be catered for.

Question 10

Model of compensation for both Freelancers and Fixed Term Contractors must be reviewed?

Answer:

A draft paper is already in place that is meant to address this concern.

Question 11

Moving some staff members to Thohoyandou was not communicated to workers or labor movements?

Answer:

The Provincial Management Committee can indeed confirm that such a move was mentioned on two occasions during rediffusions, but it was nothing more than a suggestion. Our view as the province is that as and when such decision is confirmed, the necessary engagement processes will ensue.

Question 12

How does the SABC intend to deal with Compensation for clients whose adverts are not flighted?

Answer:

Discussions are at an advanced stage to finally agree on appropriate sanction for all those staff members who are found to have wittingly ignored the operating procedures for playing adverts. The more all adverts are flighted on time without fail, then the corporation will save more money and will have less compensation to effect.

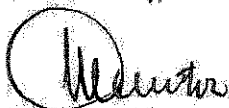
Question 13

Corruption at all levels crippling the corporation and as such recommendations of the AG report should be implemented.

Answer:

A task team for the implementation of the AG report has been set, and it is busy with its operation.

Yours faithfully,



MR. VICTOR N. RAVHUANZWO
PROVINCIAL GENERAL MANAGER
SABC LIMPOPO