

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

NO. 1486

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**LANGUAGE POLICY**

The Council for the Built Environment (CBE) wishes to inform the public of its proposed Language Policy. Enquiries and comments on this policy may be forwarded to Evelyn Bramdeow on evelyn@cbe.org.za or tel 012 346 3985 by no later than Friday, 09 December 2016.

1. PREAMBLE

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) Act 108 of 1996 recognises 11 official languages; recognises the historically diminished use and status of indigenous languages and requires of the State to take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages. The Constitution further requires all official languages to enjoy parity of esteem and to be treated equitably.

To this end, the Official Use of Language Act 12 of 2012 was promulgated to, inter alia, provide for the regulation and monitoring of the use of official languages by national government for government purposes, to require the adoption of a language policy by a national department, national public entity and national public enterprise and the establishment of a language unit for a national department, national public entity and national public enterprise.

The Council for the Built Environment (CBE) as established in terms of section 2 of the Built Environment Act, No 43 of 2000 has, therefore, in compliance with the Use of Official Language Act, developed its Language Policy.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Language Policy is to outline how the CBE will comply with and implement the provisions of the use of the Official Languages Act, 2012, and to use the chosen official languages to communicate its mandate and services to its stakeholders and South African citizens.

3. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

The provisions of this policy are applicable to all CBE employees, stakeholders and members of the public interacting with CBE.

4. NATURE OF CBE AND THE PROCESS TO DETERMINE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

The **Council for the Built Environment (CBE)** is a statutory body established under the Council for the Built Environment Act (no. 43 of 2000). It is an overarching body that coordinates the six built environment Professional Councils (Architecture, Engineering, Landscape Architecture, Project and Construction Management, Property Valuation and Quantity Surveying) for the purpose of instilling good conduct within the professions, transforming the professions and advising the South African Government on built environment related issues.

The CBE is currently located in Pretoria, and has not yet established a presence in other provinces. Various communication channels are used to educate stakeholders about the services the CBE offers.

5. THE CBE POLICY FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The CBE is committed to making use of all eleven languages as set out in the Use of Official Languages Act, ACT No. 12 of 2012 where feasible, and as and when requested by members of the public.

5.1 Official languages

The CBE has adopted the eleven official languages of the Republic of South Africa as its official languages for the purpose of this policy.

The CBE will implement the following language usage measures:

- a) The internal and external operational business language for the CBE will be English.
- b) The following languages are considered for engagements with stakeholders and the public for Government purposes:
 - i. IsiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu and siSwati (Nguni group);
 - ii. Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana (Sotho group);
 - iii. Tshivenda;
 - iv. Xitsonga;
 - v. English; and
 - vi. Afrikaans.

5.2 Factors to be considered on when to use the relevant official language

- a) The preferred use of language to stakeholders;
- b) The practicality during the engagement with stakeholders; and
- c) The major language spoken during the engagements with stakeholders.

5.3 Other languages

The CBE promotes multi-lingualism. Stakeholders, who require written or published information in a particular official language, where communication or information is not being provided in that language, may request for such communication or information to be provided in such official language. Such a request, must be in writing in the language being requested, and received by the CBE at least 60 (sixty) days prior to the communication or information being required.

6. ACCESS

In accordance with the Official Languages Act, the CBE will make provision to serve every SA citizen, in their choice of official language. Although English is the official language used by the CBE in all of its business communication, requests will be accommodated for communication in any of South Africa's official languages.

6.1 The language used for all of CBE's official written communication via formal documents, reports, policies and material documentation will be English. Requests for information in any other official language will be accommodated, as per the procedure out lined in 5.3 in this policy.

6.2 In oral communication with stakeholders and the general public, the CBE will make every attempt to accommodate the language preference/s of the interlocutor.

6.3 The website is presently available in English. Provision will be made to accommodate requests for information in any of the official language requested as per the procedure outlined in 5.3 in this policy.

6.4 Persons with special needs will be accommodated as follows:

- a) Any member of the public who requires information in braille will be required to inform the CBE in writing or telephonically and such information will be made available. Such a request, must be made and received by the CBE at least 60 (sixty) days prior to the communication or information being required.
- b) Any member of the public who wishes to communicate with the CBE in sign language must notify the Communications Department in writing at least 60 (sixty) days before the service is required, to enable the office to arrange accordingly.

7. COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

Any person who is dissatisfied with the use of official languages by the CBE may lodge a complaint addressed to the CBE, as indicated in terms of section 4(f) of the Use of Official Languages Act, 2012.

7.1 Complaints must be lodged as follows:

- a) In writing, within three months of the complaint arising.
- b) Any complaint lodged must state the following details: name and surname, physical and postal address, and contact information of the complainant.
- c) A complainant must provide a detailed description of the complaint.
- d) The CBE will consider the complaint and respond in writing, not later than three months after the complaint was lodged, informing the complainant of the outcome.

8. LANGAUGE UNIT

There will be no individual Language Unit at the CBE; the CBE Communications Unit will undertake the responsibilities of the Language Unit.

8.1 The Communications Department will be entrusted with the following responsibilities of the Language Unit:

- a) Advise the responsible accounting authority of the CBE on the development, adoption and implementation of the language policy;

- b) Monitor and assess the use of the official languages by the CBE;
- c) Monitor and assess compliance with the language policy of the CBE;
- d) Compile reports to be submitted to the national language unit in terms of section 6(2);
- e) Promote all official languages to enjoy parity of esteem and equitable treatment by the national government;
- f) Facilitate equitable access by the public to the services and information of the CBE; and
- g) Promote good language management by the CBE.

9. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The CBE will review the policy annually, or whenever the need arises.