

CONCEPT DOCUMENT

ANNUAL THUSONG SERVICE CENTRE WEEK

14 – 18 SEPTEMBER 2020

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Thusong Service Centre Programme was conceptualized in 1999. The programme has become a cornerstone of the Government-wide Access Strategy aimed at redressing the imbalances of the past by taking services and information closer to the people. Currently, there are one hundred and seventeen (117) functional Thusong Service Centres across the nine (9) provinces.
- 1.2. The Annual Thusong Service Centre Week was conceptualized and piloted in September 2014 aligned to the Public Service Month. The campaign, the campaign is in its sixth year and it seeks to profile the milestone achievement of the programme and telling success stories around the Thusong Service Centre Programme.
- 1.3. The year 2019 marked the 20 Years Anniversary of the Thusong Service Centre Programme and a celebratory event led by the GCIS was held in Cape Town and was characterized by the Thusong Excellence Awards which sought to award Excellency within the Programme. Added to that the Thusong Service Centre Indaba led by the DPSA was held to address governance and operational challenges facing the Programme.
- 1.4. This year's Annual Week event is scheduled to take place from the 14 – 18 September 2020 at Augrabies Thusong Centre, in the ZF Mcgawu District under Kai! Garib Local Municipality, Northern Cape province (date still to be announced). The Augrabies Thusong is a Satellite, wherein services are provided on a schedule basis, the Annual Week event aims to further revive the integrated mobile outreach programme at the

Centres and resuscitate the Telecentre. The Centre is located in the rural area of Augrabies wherein people are in greater need of government essential services.

- 1.5. Furthermore, the 2019 Annual weeks saw a total of 49 activities which were implemented across the provinces, services were brought closer to where people live to give renewed hope, access to quality information and to empower those previously marginalised from the mainstream of socio-economic development.
- 1.6. The Annual Week will be aligned to the Public Service Week which is a service delivery improvement mechanism and an integral part of the Batho Pele Revitalization strategy that serves as a month set aside to honor men and women who serve the nation throughout the three (3) spheres of government, as well as a mechanism to assess the quality of service delivery with a view to address the aspects thereof that are found to be sub-standard and/or evident that the Batho Pele strategy is being compromised.

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1. It is against this background that the 2020 Annual Thusong Week will be hosted by the Northern Cape province at **Augrabies Thusong Centres** (date still to be announced) under the theme ” **Growing South Africa together for an Ethical Public Service**” . The Week is scheduled from **14 – 18 September 2020**.
- 2.2. The Annual Thusong Week takes place in conjunction with the Public Service Month, and will be linked with other campaigns taking place during September, which include Heritage Month, Tourism Month and the Stay Safe campaign.
- 2.3. The Annual Week takes place where as a country we are fighting the Covid-19 pandemic, which by day it is continuing to spread across the country and globe. As a country we have witnessed since the start of the virus more public servants have lost their lives working at the forefront trying to serve those infected and affected.
- 2.4. The Annual Thusong Week seeks to contribute to the priority area “**A capable, ethical and developmental state** and is anchored around a public service that puts people first. We have also witnessed most of Thusong Centres are used as distribution points

for food parcels. The Centres become a real place of help during this pandemic and again it took public servants who took the call to serve to their hearts. These acts of service by public servant at Thusong Centre and across forms part of the drive by government to strengthen a comprehensive access strategy for citizens, allowing improved engagement with government.

- 2.5. The Thusong programme is anchored around partnerships and the Annual Week activities will be undertaken and implemented through an integrated approach, which will see the working together of the spheres of government, with civil society formations, traditional leadership, youth organisations and non-profit organisations. Activities will focus mainly in profiling the milestone achievement of the programme, telling success stories around the Thusong Service Centre Programme, reviving the integrated mobile outreach programme and through community radio telling the role the Centres has played particularly during the pandemic.
- 2.6. There is now a greater need for digitization of Thusong Centres to enable citizens to access government services through technology. The Telecentres will play a vital role given that most of these Centres are located in rural areas. Therefore, the resuscitations of Telecentres during this time will be a greater advantage to communities.

3. OBJECTIVES

- a) To acknowledge and appreciate the commitment by the frontline public servant at Thusong Centres and the recommitment to the Batho Pele Principles and the Public Service Charter
- b) To promote the Thusong Service Centre Programme as a One-Stop Centre for access to information and services.
- c) To promote and showcase the Integrated Mobile Outreach Programme as another typology of the programme which provides government services and information in far flung areas.

- d) To mobilise partnerships for the implementation of Digital Thusong Hub and provision of free WiFi at all Thusong Centres
- e) To strive for the resuscitations of Telecentres at Thusong Centres for the provision of government e-services and access to opportunities particularly for young people.

4. APPROACH

- 4.1. The Department of Government Communication and Information Systems (GCIS), in consultation with the Office of the Premier Northern Cape have agreed to host the 2020 Annual Thusong Week event at Augrabies Thusong Centre. The Augrabies Thusong is a satellite which provides services on a schedule basis.
- 4.2. In partnership with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and the Northern Cape Office of the Premier will coordinate and facilitate the Annual Thusong Week event in consultation with all key role players.
- 4.3. Partnership with the Think WiFi Company has been established to launch and install free WiFi at Augrabies Thusong Centre. Think WiFi has launched Think Zones in the Western Cape and is rolling out across South Africa. This free WiFi service is offered to everyone through an ad funded monetization model. Think WiFi provides Free WiFi access to communities in townships, public areas, universities and transportation hubs. The company requested partnership with the Thusong Programme to also roll-out at Thusong Centres.

The event is provisionally planned to unfold as follows:

- a) The main purpose of the event is to resuscitate the Augrabies Telecentre, since the Centre was launched the Telecentre was never functional even though computers were donated. It is anticipated that Think WiFi will install and launch the campaign of free WiFi.

- b) The Augrabies Thusong is a Satellite, wherein service are provided on a schedule basis, the Annual Week event aims to further revive the intergraded mobile outreach programme at the Centres. The Centre is located in the rural area of Augrabies wherein people are in greater need of government essential services.
- c) In consultation with the department of Agriculture, it is anticipated that they will launch a vegetable garden at the Centre and the MEC of Agriculture might launch the initiative.
- d) Given the lockdown regulation to observe social distancing the planned event will target 30 stakeholders, government departments and civil society of Augrabies community.
- e) The event will be livestreamed wherein one of our principals will address our targeted audience and provide message of support on the day.

5. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

- 1.1. Bi-weekly content; articles of Centres will be placed on social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter platforms for profiling purposes. Thusong Facebook and twitter pages will be linked with GCIS provincial social media pages and that of Information Resource Centre.
- 1.2. On 13 August 2019, the joint Cabinet Committee directed that all government programmes within the month of September must be intergraded, therefore it is anticipated that when the Minister of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) launches the Public Service month on the 1 September he will also alluded on the launch of the Annual Thusong Week schedule for the 14-18 September 2020. This will set the tone for the 2020 Annual Thusong Week.
- 1.1. A media statement for the month of September events is proposed to be dispatched to amplify the announcement of the 2020 Annual Thusong Service Centre Week. The statement will talk to the planned in week activities and the Augrabies Thusong event in the Northern Cape Province.

- 1.2. GCIS' internal and external platforms will be used to communicate the 2020 Annual Thusong Service Centre Week activities. This will be done through an established internal project team. An article on the *Vukuzenzele* newspaper and social media platforms will be placed.
- 1.3. The will be planned in-week activities across the country. A detailed in-week activity schedule will be finalized and shared with MANCO.

7. MESSENGERS

- a) Minister in the Presidency
- b) Deputy Minister in the Presidency
- c) Minister of Public Service and Administration
- d) Deputy Minister of Public Service and Administration
- e) Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
- f) Premiers
- g) MECs
- h) Executive Mayors
- i) Councillors
- j) DG of the GCIS
- k) DDG: Intergovernmental Coordination and Stakeholder Management
- l) GCIS EXCO members
- m) GCIS MANCO members
- n) Municipal managers
- o) Chief Director: Provincial and Local Liaison
- p) GCIS provincial directors
- q) Thusong provincial chairpersons
- r) Thusong Service Centre managers
- s) GCIS Regional Communication coordinators and senior communication office

8. STAKEHOLDERS

- a) Department of Public Service and Administration
- b) Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation
- c) Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
- d) Northern Cape Provincial Government
- e) Department of Trade and Industry
- f) Department of Small Business Development
- g) Department of Home Affairs

- h) Department of Labour
- i) Department of Agriculture
- j) Film and Publication Board
- k) Road Accident Fund
- l) Media Development Diversity Agency
- m) ICASA
- n) Think WiFi company
- o) South African Police Service
- p) SASSA
- q) Small Enterprise Development Agency
- r) Small Enterprise Finance Agency
- s) NSFAS
- t) Non-governmental organisations
- u) Community-based organisations
- v) Small, medium and micro enterprises.

The pandemic has taken the country by a storm, over the years such cannot be compared to any of the challenges the country has faced. Be that as it may, The Thusong Centres housed most of government essential services, we have witnessed brave man and women putting their lives at risk providing essential services to our citizens during this pandemic. The Week will also seek to encourage, give hope and motivate frontline public servants at Thusong Centres.