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## GENERAL NOTICE

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### NOTICE 254 OF 2015

#### THE PRESIDENCY

#### USE OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT (ACT NO. 12 OF 2012)

#### DRAFT LANGUAGE POLICY OF THE PRESIDENCY

I, Lakela Kaunda, Chief Operations Officer of The Presidency, in terms of section 4(2)(h) of the Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act No. 12 of 2012), hereby publish for public comment the Draft Language Policy of The Presidency.

Interested persons may submit their written comments, on or before 23 April 2015 to the Chief Operations Officer of The Presidency,

- by hand to the Chief Operations Officer, Union Building, Government Avenue, West Wing Building, Pretoria;
- by registered post to Private Bag x 1000, Pretoria, 0001;
- by email to [PresidencyLanguagePolicyComment@po.gov.za](mailto:PresidencyLanguagePolicyComment@po.gov.za)

Kindly provide the name of the person(s) submitting comments and their full contact details.

**Ms Lakela Kaunda**  
**Chief Operational Officer**



**THE PRESIDENCY  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**DRAFT LANGUAGE POLICY OF  
THE PRESIDENCY**

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## 1. Definitions

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Act	The Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act No.12 of 2012)
Constitution	The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
DG	Director-General of The Presidency
PanSALB	The Pan South African Language Board, established in terms of the Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act No. 59 of 1995)
Policy	The Language Policy of The Presidency
Regulations	The Regulations in terms of the Act
Republic	The Republic of South Africa

## 2. Legislative Instruments

- 2.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- 2.2 The Use of Official Languages Act, 2012
- 2.3 Regulations in terms of section 13 of the Use of Official Languages Act, 2012.

## 3. Purpose and regulatory context of this Policy

This Policy is required by section 4 of the Act, as follows:

- 3.1 Section 4(1) provides that every national department, national public entity and national public enterprise must adopt a language policy on its use of official languages;
- 3.2 Section 4(2) provides that a language policy adopted in terms of subsection (1) must:

- 3.2.1 Identify at least three official languages that the national department, national public entity or national public enterprise will use for government purposes,
- 3.2.2 Stipulate how official languages will be used in effectively communicating with the public, official notices, government publications, and inter and intra-government communication,
- 3.2.3 Describe how the national department, national public entity or national public enterprise will effectively communicate with members of the public whose language of choice is not one of its chosen official languages, or South African Sign Language,
- 3.2.4 Describe how members of the public can access the language policy, and
- 3.2.5 Provide a complaints mechanism to enable members of the public to lodge complaints regarding the use of official languages by a national department, national public entity or national public enterprise.

#### **4. Principles**

The principles underpinning this Policy are:

- 4.1 Commitment to the promotion of all languages in the Republic in order to promote multilingualism, ensure language equity and the exercise of linguistic rights as prescribed by the constitution.
- 4.2 Recognition of multilingualism as a resource in its own right and to encourage collaboration and partnerships in nation building, inclusive economic development and social cohesion;
- 4.3 Promotion of good language management by The Presidency to ensure efficient public service administration that meets the needs of the public and ensures equitable access to the services and information of The Presidency;

- 4.4 Enhancement of a people-centred service delivery approach by recognising and addressing the interests, needs and aspirations of language groups through on-going dialogue and debate;
- 4.5 Recognition of the role of The Presidency as the apex government structure in leading by example to promote multilingualism in a highly pluralistic society.

## 5. The work of The Presidency

The Presidency is mandated to:

- Support the President in leading and galvanising the whole of government and society to implement the electoral programme;
- Serve as a centre for strategic coordination in government in implementing the programme, so as to ensure that all energies and efforts are properly aligned; and
- Monitor that the programme is implemented and to evaluate whether it is achieving its intended objectives.

In this regard, the work of The Presidency therefore includes:

- 5.1 Serving as a centre of strategic leadership and coordination in implementing government's programme of action;
- 5.2 Ensuring policy coherence across government;
- 5.3 Performance monitoring and oversight of government policies and programmes;
- 5.4 Promoting national unity and social cohesion of the country;
- 5.5 Playing a leadership role in the facilitation and coordination of the Presidents activities to promote regional integration and execute the President's annual

international programme which is aligned to the international policy goals of Government.

## **6. The Presidency Language Unit**

The Presidency Language Unit will support this Policy. The functions of the Language Unit will be to:

- 6.1 Advise the DG on the development, adoption and implementation of this Policy;
- 6.2 Monitor and assess the use of official languages by The Presidency;
- 6.3 Monitor and assess compliance with this Policy;
- 6.4 Compile and submit a report to the Minister of Arts and Culture and to the Pan South African Language Board in terms of section 9 of the Act;
- 6.5 Promote parity of esteem and equitable treatment of the official languages of the Republic;
- 6.6 Facilitate equitable access to the services and information of The Presidency;
- 6.7 Promote good language management; and
- 6.8 Perform any other functions that the Minister of Arts and Culture, as custodian of the Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act No.12 of 2012) and regulations thereupon, may prescribe.

## **7. Training and capacity building**

In order to achieve the professional and efficient implementation of this Policy, The Presidency Language Unit will advise on training and capacity building.

## **8. Official languages of The Presidency**

All 11 official languages of the Republic are official languages of The Presidency.

## 9. Contextual use of official languages by The Presidency

9.1 The following factors will be taken into account in arriving at the choice of official language(s) The Presidency will use in each context/situation:

9.1.1 Geographical usage

9.1.2 Practicality

9.1.3 Expense

9.1.4 Regional circumstances

9.1.5 The balance of the needs and preferences of the public it serves.

9.2 The table below indicates how The Presidency will use the official languages.

Area of Work of The Presidency	Language(s)
Inter and intra-government communication	English
Communicating with members of the public in official written correspondence	The official languages of the Republic with due regard to the criteria outlined in clause 9.1 above.
Oral communication with members of the public	The official languages of the Republic with due regard to the criteria outlined in clause 9.1 above.
Official publications intended for public distribution (notices on The Presidency website, advertisements, forms, and signage on Presidency buildings)	The official languages of the Republic with due regard to the criteria outlined in clause 9.1 above.



Area of Work of The Presidency	Language(s)
Public hearings (Izimbizo) and other official proceedings	The official languages of the Republic with due regard to the criteria outlined in clause 9.1 above.
Communication with the hearing or sight impaired	The Presidency Language Unit will facilitate Sign Language interpreting and conversion of text into Braille or alternatively audio on request.
International communication	English and/or the preferred language of the country concerned.

**10. Communication with members of the public whose language of choice is not one of the official languages of the Republic**

- 10.1 A member of the public who wishes to communicate with The Presidency in a language that is not one of the official languages of the Republic must notify The Presidency in writing.
- 10.2 The Presidency will arrange for appropriate translation or interpreting within 20 working days of the date of the request having been received by The Presidency.

**11. Communication with members of the public whose language of choice is South African Sign Language**

- 11.1 A member of the public who wishes to communicate with The Presidency in South African Sign Language must notify The Presidency in writing.
- 11.2 The Presidency will arrange for appropriate interpreting within 20 working days of the date of the request having been received by The Presidency.

## **12. Publication of and access to this Policy**

- 12.1 This Policy will be published in all the official languages of the Republic.
- 12.2 It will be available on The Presidency's website, (<https://www.presidency.gov.za>).
- 12.3 It will be available in Braille on request or alternatively in audio on The Presidency's website, (<https://www.presidency.gov.za>).

## **13. Complaints mechanism**

- 13.1 Any person who is dissatisfied with a decision of The Presidency regarding its use of official languages may lodge a complaint in writing to the DG of The Presidency.
- 13.2 Any complaint must be lodged:
- 13.2.1 in writing, and
  - 13.2.2 within three months of the complaint arising.
- 13.3 Any complaint lodged must state the name, address, and contact information of the person lodging it.
- 13.4 Any complaint lodged must provide a full and detailed description of the complaint.
- 13.5 The DG may request a complainant to supply any additional information necessary to consider the complaint and to attend a meeting for the purpose of making an oral enquiry into the complaint.
- 13.6 The DG will consider the complaint and respond in writing, not later than three months after the complaint was lodged, informing the complainant of the decision.

#### **14. Review of Policy**

The Presidency will review this Policy whenever necessary but at least within three years of its implementation.

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