GOVERNMENT NOTICES • GOEWERMENTSKENNISGEWINGS

BOARD / RAAD

NO. 1155   **23 SEPTEMBER 2016**

ABBREVIATIONS

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Council	Council of the NAMC
NAMC	National Agricultural Marketing Council

DEFINITIONS

In this document, unless the context otherwise indicates

"Bilingualism" means the practice of using two languages (not necessarily with equal competence in both).

"Historically disadvantaged languages" means in the South African context, languages that were assigned low status by former powerful groups and which were, as a result, not used or developed for use in the media, education (after early primary school), or in public or economically significant domains. Little support was given to the development of verbal art forms in these languages.

"Interpreting" means the act of transposing an utterance from a source language into a target language in spoken form.

"Language policy" means an official decision/decree on the status of various languages spoken in heterogeneous/multilingual communities, for example which language will be the national or official language, which languages will be used as regional languages and what their status will be.

"Official language" means a language referred to in section 6 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

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1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   South Africa has eleven (11) official languages which are: isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu and siSwati (referred to as the Nguni language group); Sesotho, Sepedi and Setswana (referred to as the Sotho language group); Tshivenda, Xitsonga, English and Afrikaans.

1.2   South Africa is therefore a multilingual country. A striking characteristic of multilingualism in South Africa is the fact that several indigenous languages are spoken across provincial borders; shared by speech communities from different provinces.

1.3   Section 6 of the South African Constitution provides the principal legal framework for multilingualism, the development of the official languages and the promotion of respect and tolerance for South Africa's linguistic diversity. It determines the language rights of citizens, which must be honoured through national language policies.

1.4   The Constitution mandates change to the language situation throughout the country, giving social and political recognition to hitherto disadvantaged language groups on the basis of the expressed needs of communities and interest groups.

1.5   The Department of Arts and Culture's National Language Policy Framework requires all entities of the state to develop a language policy.

2.   PURPOSE

The purpose of the language policy is to guide language planning and management at NAMC for the advancement of institutional and individual multilingualism.

3.   **POLICY CONTEXT**

The language policy guides the use of language in all aspects of communication of the NAMC, i.e. public, internal and external communication.

4.   **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

4.1   Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997;

4.2   Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996;

4.3   Promotion of Access to Information Act 2000;

4.4   Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 2000;

4.5   Public Finance Management Act of 1999;

4.6   Use of Official Languages Act 2012;

5.   **SCOPE OF POLICY**

The language policy applies to Council members, independent NAMC committee members and staff members of the NAMC.

6.   **POLICY PRINCIPLES**

The NAMC acknowledges that there are eleven official languages in South Africa that require to be treated equitably. The NAMC undertakes to support the Language Policy and its implementation.

7.   LANGUAGE(S) OF REPORTING

7.1   Employees are allowed to:

7.1.1   Produce Reports / articles in any of the official languages, where practical, and

7.1.2   The language used in the Reports / articles may be in any official language, provided that one report will be produced in English.

8.   LANGUAGES OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

8.1   Oral communication

8.1.1   In oral communication with the public, employees should make every attempt to accommodate the language preference of the person who participates in a discussion or conversation.

8.1.2   Employees refer telephone enquiries to other employees who are able to answer in the language chosen by the caller where possible.

8.2   Written communication

8.2.1   In its languages of public communication, in an effort to create an enabling environment, the NAMC endeavours to use the official languages of the province concerned.

8.2.2   Addressees should answer correspondence in the language in which it is addressed to the NAMC, where feasible.

8.2.3   Official brochures and reports are written in accessible, reader-friendly language to accommodate the target audience and the language community for which a given document is intended.

8.3   Signage and branding

The NAMC tries to do signage and branding in the languages of the province concerned.

8.4   Advertising

Advertising should be in the language of the target audience concerned. Where possible all eleven official languages should be used in at least one of the media channels used that is radio, television, or newspapers.

9.   LANGUAGES OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

9.1   Oral communication

Oral communication takes place in languages understood by the parties concerned. All official meetings are conducted in English.

9.2   Written communication

9.2.1   The language of record is English.

9.2.2   Documents of general interest to employees are available in English.

9.2.3   Documentation relating to meetings will be in English.

9.2.4   Notices and circulars on the NAMC website will be produced in English.

9.2.5   Official written communication will, as far as possible, be gender-neutral or gender-inclusive.

10.   LABOUR RELATIONS DOCUMENTS

10.1   Conditions of service, internal policy documents, job interviews, disciplinary hearings, performance agreements, health and safety requirements will be published and/or conducted in English unless the situation dictates otherwise.

11.   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

11.1   Communications will:

11.1.1   Advise the CEO or Council on the development, adoption and implementation of the Language Policy.

11.1.2   Regulate, monitor and assess the use of official languages.

11.1.3   Monitor` and assess compliance with the Language Policy.

11.1.4   Promote parity of esteem and equitable treatment of official languages of the Republic and facilitate equitable access to services and information of the NAMC.

11.1.5   Promote good language management within the NAMC.

11.2   Risk and Compliance will:

11.2.1   Conduct regular reviews to ensure optimum compliance with this policy.

11.2.2   Receive, investigate and resolve any complaints by members of the public regarding the use of official languages and report to Communications.

11.2.3   Assist and ensure publication of: this policy in the Gazette, 90 days after: its adoption.

12.   POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy comes into effect on the date when approval of this policy is approved by CEO.

13.   IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of CEO.

References: National Language Policy Framework