

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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Department:
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Department of Public Works and Infrastructure

Language Policy

Reviewed 2019

English

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1. ACRONYMS

DG	Director-General
DPWI	Department of Public Works & Infrastructure
PanSALB	Pan South African Language Board
SASL	South African Sign Language

2. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Act	Use of Official Languages Act, 2012 (Act No. 12 of 2012)
Constitution	Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
Department	Department of Public Works & Infrastructure
Director-General	Director-General of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
Language Unit	Language Unit of the Department of Public Works & Infrastructure
Minister	Minister of Public Works & Infrastructure
PanSALB	Established in terms of section 6(5)
Policy	Language Policy of the Department of Public Works & Infrastructure
Regulations	Regulations in terms of the Act
Republic	Republic of South Africa

3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (Act No.108 of 1996)

The Use of Official Languages Act, (Act No. 12 of 2012)

Regulations in terms of section 13 of the Use of Official Languages Act (Act No. 12 Of 2012)

The Promotion of Access to Information Act (Act No. 2 of 2000)

The Pan South African Language Board Act (Act No. 59 of 1995 as amended by Act 10 of 1999)

4. PURPOSE

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

- 4.1 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; and
- 4.2 Section 4(2) provides that a language policy adopted in terms of subsection (1) must–
 - 4.2.1 Identify at least three official languages that the national department, national public entity or national public enterprise will use for government purposes;
 - 4.2.2 Stipulate how official languages will be used in effectively communicating with the public, official notices, government publications, and inter and intra-government communication;
 - 4.2.3 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 (SASL);
 - 4.2.4 Describe how members of the public can access the language policy; and
 - 4.2.5 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.

5. PRINCIPLES

The principles behind the Policy are as follows:

- 5.1 Promotion of all official languages including South African Sign Language as stipulated in Section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic;
- 5.2 Recognition of multilingualism as a national resource to enhance social cohesion and nation building as expressed in the National Development Plan;

- 5.3 Promotion of access to information to ensure efficient public service administration that meets the needs of the public and ensures equitable access to the services and information of the DPWI;
- 5.4 Prevention of the use of any language(s) for the purposes of exploitation, domination and discrimination within the DPWI;
- 5.5 Support for special redress programmes for previously marginalised indigenous official languages.

6. NATURE OF DPWI

The Department is committed to the attainment of a transformed built environment sector by:

- 6.1 Establishing and ensuring compliance to policy and legislative prescripts for the management of state owned and leased-in immovable assets and South African Construction and Property sectors;
- 6.2 Contributing to the National goals of job creation and poverty alleviation through Public Works Programme

7. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy is applicable to:

- I. Officials of the Department
- II. Entities of the Department
- III. Clients served by the Department

8. FUNCTIONS OF THE LANGUAGE UNIT

- 8.1 To develop language policy and implementation strategies for the promotion and use of official South African languages within the Department.
- 8.2 To manage database of language service providers for outsourcing language services.
- 8.3 To manage the language unit resources including human resources and equipment.

- 8.4 To manage and facilitate the provision of translating, interpreting and editing services.
- 8.5 To manage and facilitate the provision of South African Sign Language (SASL) services.
- 8.6 To manage and provide for promotion and development of official languages, including SASL
- 8.7 To implement, monitor and evaluate compliance with this policy in line with the requirements of the Act

9. DPWI OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

- 9.1 The official languages of the department it's all the 11 official languages as indicated in the Constitution.
- 9.2 The 11 official languages will be regionalised to accommodate linguistic needs of the public served.
- 9.3 The regional offices of the Department must use not less than three (3) official languages of the region in conducting its business.
- 9.4 The head office of the Department will use isiZulu, Sepedi and English to conduct its business, and it must ensure that official documents are produced in these three (3) languages.
- 9.5 Where a document is produced in one of the three (3) languages, provision must be made that the document is also available in the other two (2) languages.

10. USE OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN THE DEPARTMENT

- 10.1 **Internal Communication:** Internal communication will be conducted mainly in the three (3) official languages identified in section 9 of this policy. For recording purposes, communication received in any other language beside the three (3) languages should be translated into a language understood by the addressee amongst these three (3) official languages.
- 10.2 **External Communication:** The Department will communicate in the client's language of choice. The Department may receive communication from its clients in any of the 11 official languages, and in case where it is not in one of the three (3) languages referred to in section 9 of this policy it will be

translated into a language understood by the addressee amongst these three (3) official languages. At regional level, the choice of working language should be informed by the languages of the said province.

10.3 **Oral Communication:** External oral communication must be in the language of the target audience. If the departmental representatives is not conversant in the language of the target audience, an interpreter must be provided, including for South African Sign Language (SASL).

10.4 **Written Communication:** Will be in languages of the targeted audience.

10.5 **Publications:**

- I. General promotional and information material will be published in all the 11 official languages.
- II. Annual reports, planning documents, projects reports must be in all the three languages referred to in section 9.
- III. Magazines, websites and newsletters shall promote the spirit of multilingualism and social cohesion.
- IV. All regional publications must in the language of the target audience taking consideration of the linguistic demographics.

10.6 **Identification, Branding and Signage:**

- I. Must be in the language of the target audience.
- II. Signage for regional offices must take consideration of the linguistic demographics of the region served.
- III. All branding and corporate identity shall promote the spirit of multilingualism.

10.7 **Advertising and official notices**

- i. All official notices and advertisements issued by the Department as general public information must be in the language(s) of the target audience.
- ii. When the Department uses local newspapers, consideration must be given to the paper that is in the language of the target audience.
- iii. All national advertisements and official notices should be at least in the three languages referred to in section 9 of this policy.

11. PUBLICATION AND ACCESSIBILITY OF THE POLICY

The policy shall be available in all 11 official languages. It will be published on the departmental intranet, website and government gazette. The policy will be printed in a form of a booklet for distribution. It will be available in a format accessible to the Blind.

12. COMPLAINT MECHANISM

- 12.1 Any person who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Department regarding its use of official languages may lodge a complaint in any of the 11 official languages and address it to the DG.
- 12.2 If submitted electronically, the complaint must be transmitted to: languageunit@dpw.gov.za
- 12.3 if submitted in hard copy format delivery can either be by hand to the Departments street address or mailed by registered post to the department's postal address which is: **Private Bag x 65 Pretoria 0001**.
- The complaint must:
- i. Be in writing and lodged within 1 months of the complaint arising
 - ii. State the name, address and contact information of the complainant
 - iii. Provide a full and detailed description of the complaints.
 - iv. A complaint lodged with the Department will be acknowledged within 7 working days and it shall be investigated and resolved within three (3) months.
 - v. If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, such complaints may be escalated to the Minister which after that may be sent to PanSALB for an objective investigation and resolution.

13. REPORTING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 13.1 The DG to annually report to PanSALB and Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture as per section 9(2) of the Act on the implementation of the policy.
- 13.2 The DG to monitor and evaluate implementation of the policy within the Department.

- 13.3 The language unit to report to the DG on the activities of the unit implementing the Language Policy

14. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The policy will be constantly monitored and reviewed by the Language Unit whenever necessary. This should happen at least once every three (3) years.

15. POLICY GOVERNANCE

- 15.1 Governance of this policy is the responsibility of the DG through the Language Unit and implementation of the policy provisions shall be reported on annually in the annual report of the organisation.
- 15.2 The Director Internal Communications champions adherence to this policy by the entire Department.
- 15.3 The communication section Chief Director shall be the first point of communication for any queries relating to this policy; and such can be escalated to the DG.
- 15.4 Receipt of the policy enquiry shall be acknowledged within seven (7) working days and the query shall be responded to in full within three (3) months.
- 15.5 Deliberate acts of noncompliance with this policy shall be punishable in accordance with the Department's disciplinary procedure prescripts.

16. APPROVAL OF THE POLICY

The Language Policy must be consulted with relevant stakeholders and PanSALB which then the Director-General approves the Language Policy and publish it in the Government Gazette for implementation. The Language Policy comes into effect from the date of DG's signature.