

15 June 2013

Ms Adelaide Masemola
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Dear Ms Masemola,

SABC SUBMISSION ON THE PROPOSED ICT POLICY REVIEW FRAMING PAPER

Attached hereto, please find the SABC's Submission on the Proposed Policy Review Framing Paper for public comment.

Yours sincerely,



ZWELI MTHEMBU
HEAD : STRATEGY

SABC's SUBMISSION ON THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS - ICT POLICY REVIEW FRAMING PAPER

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SABC SUBMISSION ON THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS PROPOSED ICT POLICY REVIEW FRAMING PAPER PUBLISHED ON 24 APRIL 2013

1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Communications of South Africa (“the DoC”) published a notice in the Government Gazette No. 36408, dated 24 April 2013 inviting interested parties to make written representations on the Proposed ICT Policy Review Framing Paper (“the Framing Paper”).

The South African Broadcasting Corporation Limited (“the SABC”) takes the opportunity to make this representation. The SABC is South Africa’s public broadcaster and is licensed to operate three terrestrial free-to-air television channels and eighteen radio stations. The SABC remains committed to its public mandate of providing public broadcasting services to all South African citizens.

2. PROPOSED POLICY PRINCIPLES

The SABC is largely agreeable to the proposed policy principles as expressed in the Framing Paper as they are reflective of rights afforded to the South African citizenry through the Constitution of South Africa, which is the supreme law of the country.

The proposed principles in the Framing Paper are to a large extent, common to the ones employed in the Canadian, Australian and United Kingdom broadcasting systems. The most common principles identified in these countries are: 1) the protection of the right to freedom of expression, 2) the promotion of media pluralism, 3) the protection of the independence of the regulatory authorities, 4) the promotion the right to equality and non-discrimination on broadcasting services. In a nutshell, broadcasting service should be about empowerment, access, accountability, participation and the Framing Paper seems to cover all salient principles applicable to broadcasting services.

In the UK, the promotion of fair competition in the ICT sector is emphasized in their ICT legislative framework. The SABC believes that a clear emphasis of fair competition is critical to the development of the ICT sector. However, the proposed SA principles only make this relevant to the citizenry to the exclusion of service providers. Ideally the needs of both parties should be considered and balanced.

The SABC also supports the ownership and control of broadcasting system as in Canada. This is an important principle that South Africa needs to consider adopting, given the importance of building and retaining wealth on the African continent.

3. CONCLUSION

The SABC is agreeable to the identified ICT Policy principles as they have been tried and tested in most developed countries. Moreover, the proposed principles acknowledge the importance and necessity of the three-tiers of broadcasting which are distinctive in nature. The SABC supports the identified principles and believes that adequate funding is critical to the implementation of public broadcasting services.