

SUBMISSION FROM HEAR2DAY

From: Hear2day <hello@hear2day.co.za>

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Subject: Re: FW: Address of the venue - URGENT (Public Hearing)

Dear Kgobi Mokone, Colleagues in the Advisory Committee of the DOC ICT Policy Green Paper

As the sole representative of the NPO Organisation HEAR2DAY SA to attend the National Integrated ICT Policy Green Paper Road Show at CPUT in Bellville on Tues 25th March, I would like you take note of the following very important issues concerning the hearing impaired persons who do not use sign language, as their medium of communication, and your policy documentation ;

1. First and foremost, I would like to thank your Department and the road show organising personnel for installing the induction loop system temporarily in the auditorium.
2. This enabled me, a profoundly deaf person, using of a high quality hearing aid, in conjunction with a Cochlea Implant and word processor, to follow the entire proceedings with great clarity, as a result of which I was able to make several pages of notes, while listening to the various speakers during the morning presentation stages amongst others, MEC Alan Winde and Hon Deputy Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams.
3. Fortunately, a SA Sign Language interpreter was also on hand to enable signage Deaf attendee to follow proceedings. However, it must be mentioned that the lighting in the auditorium was particularly 'poor' making following of either lip reading or signage extremely difficult and tiring for the follower. It is imperative that adequate lighting is so essential to enable impaired listeners to follow proceeding by being able to read 'lip-speakers' and signage interpreters.
4. More specifically I would like to re-inforce the comments made by Mr. Fanie du Toit of the NCPPDSA as Manager of Public Education and Awareness, regarding the UN Rights for Persons with Sensory Loss, including hearing loss, to Universal Access and Information Communication Technology (ICT) systems.

5. We at HEAR2DAY also strongly endorse the sentiments of the Association of Hearing Loss Accessibility Development

(AHLAD) in the person of Mrs Michele Tonks, deputy Chairperson of the above NPO society with regard to the very obvious omission by the Public Broadcaster, i.e the SABC and its various TV services. It is of paramount importance that all inclusive use of 'captioning' or 'subtitling' be made particularly in the important fields of news broadcasts, National Public events, such as for instance the State Funeral of past President Nelson Mandela, or more recently the State of the Nation address and the honouring of Human Rights Day by President Jacob Zuma. Sadly such services do not exist at present.

6. Please note however that on the televising of each and every transmission, the SABC had made provision for SASL Interpreters for the Deaf Society, however there was a blatant disregard and palpable absence of any type of subtitling or captioning for the deaf and hearing impaired majority. This in itself constitutes gross discrimination against a sizeable sector of our South African Society, who would benefit from the presence of such captioning, whether hearing impaired or not!!

7. The irony is that the SABC **does** provide some captioning for its viewers, this usually being in the entertainment field of the daily 'soappies'! Furthermore it also uses captioning or subtitling for both the translation of wording, where even the signage Deaf and normal hearing persons could equally benefit from.

8. Furthermore, with the case of the Parliamentary debates(?) should without fail, **ALL** 'speeches' SHOULD be 'captioned' wherever a Deaf SASL interpreter is used. Constitutionally, it should also include switching options to empower the people of our country to full and equal accessibility to all information communications in all 11 official languages.

In closing I trust that you and your team will take note of this public submission and the above valid comments wrt the SABC's lack of compliance to agreed provisions to the Public of South Africa, and ensure that this equal RIGHT to Universal Access to information Systems to ALL THE PEOPLES OF SOUTH AFRICA INCLUDING to the Hearing Impaired, is implemented in accordance the United Nations Human Rights on Access to Information.

Thank you for your attention. We at **Hear2day** look forward to the day when these provisions, which are our Democratic right, become a real time reality. Please do not delay the process any longer!!

Finally, please ask your Staff to acknowledge receipt of this submission in order for me to report back to my constituency members at Hear2day SA

Kind regards

Fred Benning
Secretary and Treasurer

Hear2day

Living today with hearing loss

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