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## GENERAL NOTICE

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### NOTICE 300 OF 2015

#### NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SOUTH AFRICA

#### USE OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGE POLICY

#### LANGUAGE POLICY OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SOUTH AFRICA

I, Mr Andrew Malotle, Director: Corporate and International Relations of the National Library of South Africa, in terms of section 4(2)(h) of the Use of Official Language Act, 2012 (Act No. 12 of 2012), hereby publish for public comment the Language Policy of the National Library of South Africa.

Interested persons or organisations may submit their written comments, on or before 30 April 2015, to the Director of Corporate and International Relations:-

- by hand to the 75 Thabo Sehume Street, Pretoria, 0001
- Private Bag X990, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa
- by e-mail to [andrew.malotle@nlsa.ac.za](mailto:andrew.malotle@nlsa.ac.za)

Kindly provide the name of the person or organisation submitting comments and their full contact details.



Mr Andrew Malotle  
Director: Corporate and International Relations  
31 March 2015

# DRAFT LANGUAGE POLICY OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## 1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

1.1 The stated aims of this Language Policy are strategically aligned to, and informed by the following considerations.

- (a) To promote social cohesion;
- (b) The Core Values espoused by the National Library of South Africa (NLSA) in the execution of its mandate;
- (c) The relevant legislative prescripts and regulations applicable to the NLSA.

1.2 The objectives of the policy are:-

- a) As a public entity, the NLSA will promote equitable use of the South African official languages.
- b) The official language of preference will remain English
- c) The NLSA will also adopt one language from SOTHO LANGUAGES: Sepedi widely used at the NLSA Pretoria Campus.  
  
One language from NGUNI LANGUAGES: liSiXhosa, widely used at the NLSA Cape Town Campus.  
  
lin both oral and written communication with the public.
- d) To ensure redress for previously marginalized official indigenous languages.
- e) Where possible, to seek professional service providers and strategic partners to provide translation, editing and interpreting services (including Sign Language interpreting and Braille), in order to facilitate equitable access to government services, knowledge and information.
- f) To promote good language management in the NLSA for efficient public service to meet expectations and needs of the South African Public.

## **2. LEGAL MANDATES**

The language policy is aligned with the following legislative trilogy in the form of Acts, provides the fundamental legal mandate for putting into existence a language policy for the National Library of South Africa:

- (a) The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.
- (b) The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000).
- (c) Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act 59 of 1995,
- (d) An amended version of the South African Languages Act proposed by  
PANSALB: BILL
- (e) The National Language Policy Framework of 2002
- (f) Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act No. 3 of 2000);
- (g) Batho Pele Principles

## **3. GENERAL SCOPE OF APPLICATION OF THE POLICY**

This policy is applicable and binding to the NLSA.

## **4. WORKING LANGUAGES OF RECORD IN THE NLSA**

- 4.1 The main working languages of record in the NLSA is English:  
no person will be prevented from using the language(s) of his or her preference, provided the language is espoused in the National Language Policy.
- 4.2 Translations will be provided for documents originally written in English within 30 days of the date of request.
- 4.3 For purposes of expediting easy access to information and sound record keeping, both soft and hard copies of the translated versions of the original document will be kept together with the source manuscript.

- 4.4 Meetings shall be conducted the English language: Provided that:-
- 4.4.1 No person will be prevented from using a language of her/his choice to express himself/herself in the meetings held by the NLSA; and -
- 4.4.2 Interpretation services (consecutive, simultaneous as well as whispered) will be provided where necessary or where needed.
- 4.5 Chairpersons in meetings, as well as supervisors in the performance of specific functions in the NLSA, must actively and overtly encourage the use of indigenous languages in such contexts in order to elevate their status and advance their diminished usage.
- 4.6 Sign Language interpreting where needed will also be provided for, by sourcing an interpreter.

## **5. COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

- 5.1 All official correspondence with members of the public should take place in any of the official languages preferred by the target audience, where practically possible.
- 5.2 All oral communication should be conducted in the language preferred by the target audience where practically possible.
- 5.3 Where it is both necessary and practically possible, every effort must be expended to utilize language facilitation interventions like interpreting (consecutive, simultaneous, telephone and Sign Language interpreting).

## **6. PROVISION OF TRANSLATION, EDITING AND INTERPRETING SERVICES**

- 6.1 The NLSA will consult with the relevant language practitioners in the Department of Arts and Culture Language Services, regarding all requests for translation and/or editing of documents. These will be accompanied by a letter requesting a service.

6.2 All requests for interpreting services during meetings, and disciplinary hearings will be submitted to the NLSA which will expedite the provision of such services.

6.3 Requests for translation, editing and checking must be authorized by relevant officials in the NLSA.

## **7. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

NLSA communication both national and international level will be conducted in English or on an ad hoc basis taking cue from the language preferred by the target country.

## **8. PHASING IN STRATEGY OF IMPLEMENTATION**

The policy will be phased in over a three year period in order to allow the NLSA ample time to:-

8.1 Incrementally develop resources required for implementation; and

8.2 To entrench a culture of effective management of the implementation process.

## **9. MONITORING AND REPORTING**

For purposes of enhancing an efficient and effective incremental approach to the constant development of this policy, the following strategies will be put in place in the NLSA:-

9.1 The policy will undergo constant evaluations every three years to strategically align each review with relevant budgetary processes.

9.2 The NLSA will consult with the DAC Language Services for monitoring the implementation of the Policy.

## 10. COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLICY

This Policy will come into effect on the date of adoption.

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Indigenous Languages	Languages which according to the historical record of South Africa, originated in South Africa.
Interpreting	An act of transposing an utterance from a source language to a target language in a spoken form
Language	Human speech spoken or written or in a form of signs as a means for communication.
Official Correspondence	Official written documents from all government departments (i.e. circulars, letters, public speeches, policies, etc)
Oral Communication	The giving of information or news verbally.
Sign Language	This is the language used to communicate with the hearing-impaired.
Translation	This is an act of transposing a text from one language to another language in a written form.

Mr Andrew Malotle:

Director: Corporate and International Relations



SIGNATURE

31/03/2015

DATE

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SOUTH AFRICA

## ANNEXTURE:

## SECTION 5: LANGUAGE POLICY

(1) Every national department, national public entity and national public enterprise must adopt a language policy regarding its use of official languages for government purposes before 15 March 2012.

(2) A language policy adopted in terms of subsection (1) must –

(a) comply with the provisions of section 6 of the Constitution and this Act;

(b) identify at least two official languages that the national department, national public entity or national public enterprise will use for purposes of government (which languages have the higher function capacity); and will implement in its language policy a progressive plan to deliver services to the public in at least one indigenous language additionally;

(c) stipulate how official languages will be used, amongst other things, in communications with members of the public, official notices, government publications and inter- and intra-government communications; but within 12 months of the date of this Act, all national government's forms that may be used by the public must be made available in all 11 languages in at least electronic format which may be accessed via the internet;

(d) describe how the national department, national public entity or national public enterprise will communicate with members of the public where their language of choice is not an official language contemplated in paragraph (b), with the guiding principle that service delivery is most effective in the language of the citizen;

(e) describe how members of the public can access the language policy;

(f) provide for a complaints mechanism by members of the public regarding the use of official languages by the national department, national public entity or



national public enterprise, which complaints mechanism may not be less than the minimum format as set out in the regulations issued in terms of this Act;

(g) provide for any other matter that the Minister may prescribe by regulation; and

(h) be published in the Government Gazette as soon as reasonably practicable, but within 90 days of its adoption.

(3) Every national department, national public entity and national public enterprise must –

(a) ensure that a copy of its language policy is available on request to members of the public at all of its offices;

(b) display at all its offices a summary of its language policy in such manner and place that it can be read by members of the public; and

(c) publish the language policy in all 11 official languages on the department's website within six months of the promulgation of this Act.

(4) In addition to the purposes in section 7(b), and subject to the provisions of subsection (5), government documents shall be made available in all 11 official languages, and in cases where this is not feasible, national government departments shall publish documents simultaneously in at least the six categories of languages.

6 (5) The languages referred to in subsection (2) are:

(a) Tshivenda

(b) Xitsonga

(c) Afrikaans

(d) English

(e) At least one from the Nguni group (isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu and siSwati)

(f) At least one from the Sotho group (Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana).

(6) Any alternative policy referred to in subsection (2) –

(a) shall be adopted and implemented in consultation with the Pan South African Language Board; and

(b) shall comply with the provisions of sections 6(3) (a) and 30 of the Constitution.

(c) The selection of any applicable number of languages in terms of subsection (2) shall apply to:

(d) legislative, executive and judicial functions of government in the national sphere taking into account all relevant factors, including usage, practicality and the balance of the needs and preferences of the population as a whole, provided that no less than six languages in the category of languages shall be used in the national sphere for the purpose of written communication as determined in terms of subsection (6).