

GENERAL NOTICE

NOTICE 412 OF 2015

The CSIR Language Policy

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is one of the leading scientific and technology research, development and implementation organisations in Africa. It undertakes directed, multidisciplinary research and development for socio-economic growth. The organisation responds to national priorities to help improve the lives of the people of South Africa. In doing so, the CSIR supports the spirit of the Constitution.

Regulation 3 of the Regulations issued under the Use of Official Languages Act (No. 12 of 2012) ("UOLA") requires the CSIR, as a national public entity, to publish its adopted language policy in the *Government Gazette*.

In summary, in striving to make information about its work more accessible to members of the public, as well as its collaborators in government departments, industry and tertiary education institutions, the CSIR is adopting English, isiZulu and Sepedi as its required three official languages, while also making available information in additional languages in areas where the organisation has a regional footprint. The selection of the organisation's three official languages is based on maximum reach, through the principle of mutually intelligible languages, covering some 77% of the population – isiZulu and Sepedi having the highest numbers of first language speakers in their categories (Nguni and Sotho languages), according to the 2011 Census conducted by Statistics South Africa.

This Policy is available in the following three official languages: English; isiZulu; and Sepedi, and will – upon reasonable request and subject to the procedure referred to below – be made available in Braille. This Policy shall also be available in hard copy format, as well as electronically and a summary thereof will be displayed in the three official languages on the CSIR's external and internal websites, and at the main and regional sites.

CSIR LANGUAGE POLICY

1. Purpose

1.1. What it seeks to address

The CSIR Language Policy gives effect to the South African Constitutional directives on multilingualism and is aimed at ensuring:

- Compliance with, and demonstration of the CSIR's adoption of both the spirit and letter of the Constitution, as well as the Use of Official Languages Act (No. 12 of 2012) ("UOLA") promulgated thereunder
- Demonstrating that, in determining its three official languages as required by UOLA, the CSIR properly considered the factors stipulated in the Constitution, including:
 - Language usage of members of the public that access the services of the CSIR, taking into account both the language needs of such individuals, as well as the language statistics in the population census published by the Statistician-General in terms of the Statistics Act (No. 6 of 1999);
 - The nature of the research that the CSIR conducts and its mandate (as more fully addressed in Annexure "A" attached hereto); and
 - The expenses associated with adopting official languages for government purposes
- Demonstrating that the CSIR considered practical and positive measures that it will take to elevate the status and advance the use of indigenous languages of historically diminished use and status
- Ensuring that communication activities undertaken by the organisation contribute positively to the reputation and brand image of the CSIR

1.2. Implications

- The Strategic Communications Unit within the CSIR will be responsible for managing all language related matters
- Budgetary constraints and implications in terms of translation services
- Translation challenges for scientific terminology
- Promote/raise awareness on the policy internally to ensure compliance

1.3. Benefits

- Opportunity for increased visibility and awareness of the organisation's role in improving the lives of South Africans
- Elevating the status and advance the use of indigenous languages of historically diminished use and status
- Providing guidance to both internal and external stakeholders on the CSIR's Language Policy
- Ensuring communication that contributes positively to the CSIR brand image and is aligned with the organisational mandate and all applicable legislation
- Cost-effective approach to communication, while giving effect to legislation

1.4. Regulatory framework

- Section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (No. 108 of 1996)
- The Use of Official Languages Act (No. 12 of 2012) ("UOLA"), as well as the Regulations issued thereunder
- The Scientific Research Council Act (No. 46 of 1988)
- The Public Finance Management Act (No. 1 of 1999) ("PFMA"), as well as the Treasury Regulations issued thereunder
- The Promotion of Access to Information Act ("PAIA") (No. 2 of 2000)
- South African Language Practitioners' Council Act (No. 8 of 2014)

1.5. Links to other documents/policies

- CSIR Conditions of Service
- CSIR Approval Framework
- CSIR Recruitment Policy
- CSIR Procurement Policy
- CSIR Branding Policy
- CSIR Media and Communication Policy
- CSIR PAIA Manual
- CSIR Annual Report

1.6. Stakeholders

- The Department of Science and Technology ("DST") as Executive Authority
- The Department of Arts and Culture as custodian of UOLA
- The Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB)
- Citizens of South Africa
- All clients of the CSIR
- All CSIR employees, in particular the following functions:

- The CSIR Board as Accounting Authority
- The CSIR Executive Management Committee
- CSIR Strategic Alliances and Communication
- The CSIR Deputy Information Office for purposes of PAIA

2. Policy statements

2.1. General policy statement in support of UOLA

The CSIR supports the promotion of the parity of esteem and equitable treatment of all 11 official languages of the Republic of South Africa, as well as the facilitation of equitable access to services and information.

2.2. Establishing of a Language Unit

The Strategic Communications Unit within the CSIR, will be responsible for managing all language related matters. No exclusive unit will be formed.

2.3. Three official languages

The three official languages that the CSIR will use for government purposes, and which it will so use in the manner as further set out below, are: English, isiZulu and Sepedi. This will ensure maximum reach, through the principle of mutually intelligible languages and based on official data on the spread of first language speakers in South Africa at the time of formulating this policy.

2.4. Scope of application

The CSIR language policy will be employed in the following manner, with regards to the official languages selected and the products that they will apply to:

2.4.1. Use of English

- English will be retained as the organisation's *de facto* corporate language for purposes of both internal and external communication
- As *de facto* corporate language, corporate communication takes place in English
- For purposes of this Policy, 'corporate communication' will include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - The CSIR's Annual Report
 - The Shareholders Compact concluded annually with the DST
 - The CSIR's external corporate website

- All national and international agreements
- The CSIR PAIA Manual
- Recruitment and procurement documents
- Official organisational newsletters and publications
- CSIR promotional material
- All internal communication, including organisational policies
- All official notices, government publications and inter- and intra-government communication
- All official internal proceedings, including Board meetings, will be conducted in English
- Internal hearings, such as disciplinary hearings, will be conducted in English, however, upon request, an interpreter will be made available in any other official language

2.4.2. Use of isiZulu and Sepedi

The following documentation will be availed in isiZulu and Sepedi:

- Abridged version of the Annual Report
- Summarised organisational promotional material
- Abridged Shareholder Compact
- Sound clips/podcasts on significant organisational developments will, where deemed appropriate, be hosted on the Internet/web to ensure benefit to those who do not read or write isiZulu or Sepedi, but understand the spoken word.

2.4.3. Procedure for access to South African Sign Language and Braille

2.4.3.1. Strategic Communications will consider the nature of any proposed communication, and with the composition of the audience in mind - may on an ad hoc basis make available translation services in Grade 2 English Braille and/or South African Sign Language.

2.4.3.2. Upon receipt of a request by an individual(s) to make text available in Braille and/or South African Sign Language, Strategic Communications will consider such request, and - in doing so - shall balance the needs of the requester(s) with the Purpose of this Policy, taking into account any budgetary and other constraints.

2.4.3.3. Translation services provided under 2.4.3.1 and 2.4.3.2 extend only to Grade 2 English Braille and/or South African Sign Language.

2.5. Use of languages other than the above-mentioned three official languages

- The CSIR will strive to make more organisational information available in its three official languages as well as in additional languages as the capacity of the organisation's language unit grows.
- Project-specific material will be made available in one or more official languages in accordance with the needs of the project(s); for example, where interaction is required with first language speakers at implementation site(s).
- The CSIR will endeavour to produce material in the relevant languages of areas where the organisation has a footprint.
- As part of its media liaison efforts, and where deemed appropriate, the CSIR may make available spokespeople from its staff base to discuss their work on radio and/or television in their first language(s).
- The CSIR will endeavour to, as far as it is practical and reasonable, respond to requests and communications sent to it in languages other than the three selected languages of the organisation (English, isiZulu and Sepedi).

2.6. The role of technology

- The CSIR will actively pursue the incorporation of its research results in language technologies and, where deemed appropriate, technological capabilities will be used to enhance the implementation of this policy.
- As part of this initiative, the use of technological innovations, such as text-to-speech, will be explored as a means to ensure that organisational information is made accessible to as wide an audience as possible.

2.7. Complaints mechanism for members of the public

- Any complaint related to the CSIR's use of official languages can be lodged in writing to the CSIR Deputy Information Officer for purposes of PAIA.
- Any person dissatisfied with the decision of the Deputy Information Officer, as indicated above, may lodge a complaint addressed to the CEO of the CSIR.
- All complaints must be directed in writing (e-mail, fax or registered post) and contain the name, address and contact information of the complainant; be lodged within 3 months of the complaint arising; provide a detailed description of the complaint.
- Decisions on complaints must be made and communicated in writing to the complainant within 3 months of receipt of the complaint by the CSIR.

- Any complainant not satisfied with the decision following the complaints process as set out above can lodge an appeal with the CSIR Board. The appeal must be in writing and lodged within one month of the decision under question.

2.8. Regular monitoring and assessing

- The CSIR will regularly monitor and assess its use of official languages
- The CSIR will regularly monitor and assess compliance with this Policy
- The CSIR will strive to continuously strengthen the work of its Language Unit by collaborating with other institutions to develop science terminology in South Africa's 11 languages

2.9. Compilation of a report

- The CSIR will annually compile and submit a report to the Minister of Arts and Culture and to the PanSALB in compliance with the legislative requirements
- The report referred to above, shall include a report on the implemented activities of the language policy plan; the progress made with the implementation of this Policy, and any complaints received and resolutions taken to address such complaints

Annexure A

ABOUT THE CSIRIn existence since 1945, the CSIR is one of the leading science and technology research, development and implementation organisations in Africa. It operates within the mandate as captured as follows in its enabling legislation, being the Scientific Research Council Act (Act 46 of 1988, as amended by Act 71 of 1990):

"The objects of the CSIR are, through directed and particularly multi-disciplinary research and technological innovation, to foster, in the national interest and in fields which in its opinion should receive preference, industrial and scientific development, either by itself or in co-operation with principals from the private or public sectors, and thereby to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of the people of the Republic, and to perform any other functions that may be assigned to the CSIR by or under this Act."

The CSIR's main site is in Pretoria, while it is represented in other provinces of South Africa through regional offices situated in the Western Cape, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Annexure B

English Braille, also known as **Grade-2 Braille**, is the braille alphabet used for English. It consists of 250 or so letters (phonograms), numerals, punctuation marks, formatting marks, contractions, and abbreviations (logograms).

There are three levels of complexity in English Braille. Grade 1 is a (nearly) one-to-one transcription of printed English, and is restricted to basic literacy. Grade 2, which is nearly universal in print beyond basic literacy materials, abandons one-to-one transcription in many places and adds hundreds of abbreviations and contractions. Both grades have been standardized. "Grade 3" is not a single system, but any of various personal shorthands. It is almost never found in publications. Most of this article describes the 1994 American edition of Grade-2 Braille, which is largely equivalent to British Grade-2 Braille.

Braille was originally intended, and is frequently portrayed, as a re-encoding of the English orthography that is used by sighted people. However, for the blind, braille is an independent writing system, not a variant of the printed English alphabet.

Annexure B

South African Sign Language (SASL) is the official sign language used by Deaf people in South Africa. SASL is not the only sign language used in South Africa, but it is the language that is being promoted as the language to be used by all Deaf people in South Africa. It is not an official language of South Africa. The South African government added a National Language Unit for South African Sign Language in 2001. It is promoted as the language of all Deaf people in South Africa, although the Deaf in South Africa historically do not form a single group.

In 1995, the previous South African National Council for the Deaf (SANCD) was transformed into the Deaf Federation of South Africa (DeafSA), which resulted in a radical policy change in matters for deaf people in South Africa, such as the development and adoption of a single sign language and the promotion of sign language over oralism. There are as many as twelve distinctly different dialects of sign language in South Africa.

In addition to South African sign languages, American Sign Language (ASL) is also used by some Deaf people in South Africa. SASL is the sign language that is used during television news casts in South Africa. Sign language is also used in the South African parliament. There are around 40 schools for the Deaf in South Africa, most using a variety of SASL.

"Sign language" is mentioned in the South African constitution, and the South African Schools Act permits the study of "sign language" in lieu of an official language studied at school.

South African Sign Language is not entirely uniform and continues to evolve. Due to the geographical spread of its users and past educational policies, there are localised dialects of South African Sign Language and signs with many variants.
