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**GENERAL NOTICES • ALGEMENE KENNISGEWINGS**

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**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE****NOTICE 678 OF 2016****Proposed Language Policy  
Use of Official language Act, 2012 (Act No. 12 of 2012)**

The South African State Theatre (SAST), which is an entity of the Department of Arts and Culture, intends to adopt a Language Policy for the entity in terms of section 4 (1) of the Use of Official Language Act, 2012.

In terms of Regulation 3 (2) (b) of the Act, the SAST Council hereby invites interested persons to submit their comments on the proposed SAST Language Policy within 30 days of date of publication of this notice at any of the following addresses:

The Chairperson of Council  
Ms. Barbara Masekela  
SOUTH AFRICAN STATE THEATRE  
Attention: Mr. Sibongiseni Mkhize

- 1) Postal Address:  
P O Box 566  
Pretoria  
0001
- 2) Physical Address:  
320 Pretorius Street  
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0002
- 3) Email Address:  
[eva@statetheatre.co.za](mailto:eva@statetheatre.co.za)  
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an agency of the  
Department of Arts and Culture

# OFFICIAL LANGUAGE POLICY

<b>Version</b>	Draft 2.0
<b>Effective Date</b>	On approval by Council

**Document Control Sheet**

<b>Document Type</b>	Policy
<b>Document Name</b>	Official Language Policy
<b>Document ID</b>	...

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<b>Document Status</b>	Draft
<b>Version</b>	2.0
<b>Document Date</b>	7 April 2015
<b>Effective Date</b>	On approval by Council
<b>Review Date</b>	Annually, April.

<b>Policy Approval</b>			
<b>Authority</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Council</b>			
<b>Committee (REMCO)</b>			
<b>MANCO</b>			
<b>Union</b>			
<b>External Review</b>	n/a		

**Version Control**

<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment Details</b>	<b>Approved by</b>

## Table of Contents

1. Abbreviations, Acronyms and Definitions.....	4
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2. Contextual Background .....	5
3. Purpose .....	6
4. Scope.....	6
5. Legislative and Regulatory Compliance.....	6
<b>Chapter 2 Policy Statement .....</b>	<b>7</b>
6. Principles.....	7
7. Official Language of SAST .....	7
8. Use of Official Languages by SAST .....	7
<b>Chapter 3 Application and Procedures.....</b>	<b>9</b>
9. Communication with members of the Public whose language of choice is not one of the official languages of the Republic .....	9
10. Communication with members the Public whose language of choice is South African Sign Language.....	9
11. Publication and Access to this Policy.....	9
12. Language Unit of SAST .....	9
13. Complaints .....	9
<b>Chapter 4 Monitoring and Evaluation .....</b>	<b>10</b>
14. Policy Monitoring and Evaluation .....	10
<b>Chapter 5 Policy Maintenance.....</b>	<b>10</b>
15. Updates and Review.....	10

## 1. Abbreviations, Acronyms and Definitions

Act	Use of Official Languages Act, Act 12 of 2012
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of the South African State Theatre
Clause	Refers to sections of this Policy document
Constitution	Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, amended
Council	The South African State Theatre Council (Board)
Language rights infringement	Any action that contravenes Section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, amended
Linguistic Approach	The approach relied upon, language preference, language use, identifying relevant demographics in language planning and adoption of this policy
Minister	Minister of Arts and Culture
Official Languages	The languages referred to in section 6 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act, Act 1 of 1999
Policy	The Official Language Policy of the South African State Theatre
Regulations	Regulations in terms of Section 13 of the Use of Official Languages Act, Act 12 of 2012
Republic	The Republic of South Africa
SAST	The South African State Theatre

## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 2. Contextual Background

South Africans speak approximately 25 different languages. 11 of these languages have been granted the status of official language in terms of the Constitution due to these being spoken by 98% of the South African population. The 11 official languages are isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu and siSwati (referred to as the Nguni language group); Sesotho, Sepedi and Setswana (referred to as the Sotho language group); Tshivenda, Xitsonga, English and Afrikaans. Thus it is that South Africa may be regarded as a multilingual country.

While the Constitution sets out the need for all official languages to enjoy parity of esteem and be treated equitably, linguistic diversity in post-apartheid South Africa has been problematic due to the lack of a clearly defined language policy. The Use of Official Languages Act has thus been introduced. The Act aims to ensure through its objectives that:

- National government may regulate and monitor the use of official languages for government purposes,
- Promote parity of esteem and equitable treatment of official languages of the Republic,
- Facilitate equitable access to services and information of national government, and
- Promote good language management by national government for efficient public service administration and to meet the needs of the public.

The South African State Theatre (SAST), a PFMA schedule 3A public entity of the National Department of Arts and Culture, is tasked with promotion, development and mainstreaming the role in socio-economic development of the performing arts, culture and heritage programmes. Situated in the Capital city of South Africa, Tshwane, SAST serves predominantly the Tshwane public as well as greater Gauteng as its main audience. However, SAST functions as a national platform for the South African performing arts sector attracting public participation from communities and mainstream performers situated across the Republic. SAST is thus tasked to deliver public

services to both audiences and performers. The performing arts sector is a multilingual concentration of people which SAST serves.

In order to comply with the Act, promote the provisions of the Constitution and serve its diverse multilingual public, SAST has introduced this Official Language Policy. This Policy aims to provide SAST with a framework for the use of official languages when communicating with both internal and external stakeholders.

### **3. Purpose**

Section 4(1) of the Act provides that every national department, national public entity and national public enterprise must adopt a language policy on its use of official languages. This policy aims to comply with this requirement of the Act. In doing so, SAST adheres to a linguistic approach that accommodates linguistic diversity relevant to its mandate.

The purpose of this policy is to provide for the use of official languages in all aspects of SAST communication by:

- Establishing the criteria for selection of the appropriate official language that SAST will use for communication under different contexts; and
- Establishing the official language of SAST.

### **4. Scope**

This policy, together with any related policies, is applicable to the South African State Theatre, its employees, members of Council, Stakeholders and service providers.

### **5. Legislative and Regulatory Compliance**

This policy document is prepared in accordance with the provisions of the:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, amended;
  - *In particular, section 6 and 9.*
- Use of Official Languages Act, Act 12 of 2012; and
  - *More especially the provisions outlined under section 4.*
- Regulations in terms of Section 13 of the Use of Official Languages Act, Act 12 of 2012.

## Chapter 2 Policy Statement

### 6. Principles

As a basis for this policy, SAST recognises:

- that there are 11 official languages in South Africa and that, together with the South African Sign Language, all official languages must be promoted and have equality of treatment;
- it is committed to the promotion of all languages in the Republic in order to ensure constitutional language equity and language rights, as required by a democratic dispensation;
- that multilingualism must be recognised as a resource to maximize collaborative partnerships in nation building, economic development and social cohesion;
- it is required to ensure good language management within the SAST administration and services that meets the needs of the public and ensures equitable access to services and information;
- that it must prevent the use of any language for the purpose of exploitation, domination and discrimination within the SAST;
- SAST facilitates the arts and entertainment and encourages diverse cultural provision, SAST plays a unique and vital role in the promotion and development of all official languages; and
- that as it seeks to present the very best performing arts work from the local communities, Gauteng, the country and from around the world, that language is not only about communication, but also about identity, creativity and respect.

### 7. Official Language of SAST

SAST has adopted all 11 official languages of the Republic as its official languages for the purposes of this Policy.

### 8. Use of Official Languages by SAST

The following criteria has been taken into account in arriving at the choice of official languages to be used by SAST:

- Mandate,

- Usage,
- Practicality,
- Expense,
- Regional circumstances, and
- Needs and preferences of the public served.

The following table provides the context within which official languages will be used by SAST:

<b>COMMUNICATION CONTEXT</b>	<b>OFFICIAL LANGUAGE</b>
Inter and Intra-government communication.	English.
Communicating with members of the public (official written correspondence).	Official Languages of the Republic, with due regard to the criteria outlined in clause 8.
Communicating with members of the public (oral communication).	Official Languages of the Republic, with due regard to the criteria outlined in clause 8.
Official publications intended for public distribution (includes inter alia notices on SAST website, advertisements, newsletters, social media, forms, signage on buildings).	Official Languages of the Republic, with due regard to the criteria outlined in clause 8.
Public forums and official proceedings.	Official Languages of the Republic, with due regard to the criteria outlined in clause 8.
Communication with hearing or sight impaired persons.	Where requested to do so, SAST will provide South African Sign Language interpreting and conversion of text into Braille or Audio.
International communication.	English.

## **Chapter 3 Application and Procedures**

### **9. Communication with members of the Public whose language of choice is not one of the official languages of the Republic**

A member of the public wishing to communicate with SAST in a language which is not one of the official languages of the Republic must notify SAST in writing. Due consideration, based on the criteria outlined in clause 8 above, will be applied to every written request. Accordingly, after due consideration, SAST will arrange for the appropriate translation or interpretation within 20 working days of the request having been received.

### **10. Communication with members the Public whose language of choice is South African Sign Language**

A member of the public wishing to communicate with SAST in South African Sign Language must notify SAST in writing. SAST will arrange for the appropriate interpretation within 20 working days of the request having been received.

### **11. Publication and Access to this Policy**

This SAST Policy will be published in the official languages of the Republic, as indicated in Section 8 of this policy. It will be made available on the SAST website [www.statetheatre.co.za](http://www.statetheatre.co.za). It will be made available on request in Braille or alternatively in audio. It will be displayed at the SAST offices in such a manner so that it may accessible to be read by the public.

### **12. Language Unit of SAST**

In terms of Section 12 of the Act, SAST has applied for exemption to Section 7 of the Act. SAST thus does not have a language unit. An appropriate Senior Manager will be responsible to perform the functions of the language unit at SAST.

### **13. Complaints**

Any person who is dissatisfied with the decision of SAST regarding the use of official languages may lodge a complaint in writing to the CEO. Complaints must be delivered

to the SAST offices, or to the SAST postal address by registered post or by fax or email to the SAST fax or email address provided herein. Complaints must be lodged within 3 months of arising and be made in writing. Any complaint lodged must reflect the full name of the complainant, address and email and telephone contact information. Complaints must be described in full and supported by factual evidence. The CEO may request further information from the complainant. The complainant must be available to attend a meeting in order to make an oral enquiry into the complaint. The CEO will consider the complaint and respond in writing, not later than 3 months after the complaint was lodged, informing the complainant of the outcome.

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome, he or she may lodge an appeal with the Minister. Such an appeal must be in writing and must be made within 1 month of the outcome. Full details describing the complaint must be provided in the appeal. The Minister will consider the complaint and respond in writing, not later than 3 months after the complaint was lodged, informing the complainant of the outcome.

## **Chapter 4 Monitoring and Evaluation**

### **14. Policy Monitoring and Evaluation**

Implementation and adherence to this Policy will be monitored through the SAST mechanisms of ensuring compliance with approved SAST policies. Non-compliance may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Chapter 5 Policy Maintenance**

### **15. Updates and Review**

The policy must be reviewed annually, by the anniversary date of its approval.