
SECTION 2: POLICY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. VISION FOR THE NATIONAL COMMERCIAL PORTS POLICY

South Africa's commercial ports system should be globally competitive, safe and secure, operating at internationally accepted levels of operational efficiency, in a manner that supports the goals and objectives of the RDP and GEAR. Additionally, it should serve the economy and meet the needs of port users in a manner that is economically and environmentally sustainable.

Vision

“A system of ports seamlessly integrated in the transport network, that jointly and individually is self-sustainable through the delivery of high levels of service and increasing efficiency from a growing customer base, enhancing South Africa's global competitiveness and facilitating the expansion of the South African economy and creating a better life for all”.

The term “port”, as used in this policy, is defined as a “transport node with a defined area and facility developed and maintained wholly or in part for the purpose of launching, beaching, mooring, berthing and facilitating the safe and efficient inter- and intra-modal transference and transiting of passengers and goods between the maritime and any other transport mode, and includes any building, installation or equipment within any such area which is intended to be so used”.

A port, as defined above, is a transport node in the logistic chain, where such a logistics chain can be described as all physical (transport, distribution and warehousing) information and financial flows from the point of supply to the final consumer. National benefits only accrue from the investment and management of ports to the extent of the value added to the national trade undertaking. Ports may be logistical and transport nodal points of multi-functional trade and industrial complexes where goods are not only in transit, but also handled, manufactured and distributed. Underlying the port system is the national, provincial and local transport planning effort, to reduce the transport cost component of goods and services to the nation and the region.

This policy is based on a holistic view of the South African commercial ports system. Each commercial port in the country is part of this system. Each port has natural and strategic advantages and disadvantages. Working from a system perspective, the intention of this policy is to maximize the strategic advantages of the individual ports of greater national and regional benefits.

2. GOALS OF THE NATIONAL COMMERCIAL PORTS POLICY

In order to deliver on this vision a number of broad goals need to be pursued. These are:

- To invest in port infrastructure, superstructure, equipment and system in ways which satisfy social, financial, economic or strategic investment criteria;
- To improve the safety, security, reliability, quality and speed of port operations and services;
- To enable port users to access the port system in the most efficient way possible; and
- To achieve the above goals in a manner which is economically and environmentally sustainable, and minimises negative externality impacts on non-users.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL COMMERCIAL PORTS POLICY

- Ensure affordable, effective, efficient and safe port services;
- Encourage fair competition based on transparent rules applied consistently across the transport and port system;
- Shift the financial burden for port infrastructure system from South African taxpayers to users;
- Improve infrastructure and service levels where appropriate, based on user needs;
- Ensure safe transportation, a clean environment and service to designated areas;
- Establish appropriate institutional arrangements and legislation to support the governance of ports;
- Promote the development of an integrated regional production and distribution system in support of government industrial policies;
- Facilitate and enhance the expansion of international trade and tourism in general, and exports in particular;
- Promote the development of an efficient and productive South African port industry capable of competing in international markets;
- Establish an appropriate regulatory framework that is also flexible and responsive;
- Promote increased international relations; and
- Ensure cost effective and efficient port management and operation.

4. BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR A NATIONAL COMMERCIAL PORTS POLICY

The following principles were formulated to focus the policy and to ensure that it is in line with government policies:

1. National needs, aspirations and requirements shall be of primary consideration;
2. Consideration of user and other stakeholder needs and views;
3. Port system development, management and enhancement will primarily remain a national function;
4. The national government will retain its regulatory role to ensure the unbiased regulation of safety and quality in accordance with

- international, regional, national, provincial and local expectations and standards;
5. Regulation should be kept to a minimum, but without compromising national aspirations, safety and efficiency;
 6. Participants in the market should be treated equally and fairly; and
 7. The principle of user pays or cost recovery from direct users will be applied as far as possible, including an appropriate return.

The basic principles and strategic objectives listed above are accepted as the guiding framework for this National Commercial Ports Policy.