



**SABC REVISED EDITORIAL  
POLICIES  
2016**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The South African Broadcasting Corporation SOC Limited (herein under referred to as the Corporation / SABC) is required, in terms of Section 6 of the Broadcasting Act No 4 of 1999, as amended (herein under referred to as the Act), to develop policies that are intended to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (herein under referred to as ICASA), the Corporation's licence conditions, Regulations and the provisions of the Act.

In an effort to give structure and effect to the provisions of the Act, the Corporation's licence conditions and ICASA's Code of Conduct, the SABC has developed its Editorial Policies.

This document is a compilation of the policies, which the SABC is required to use as a guide in discharging its public broadcasting mandate. The policies represent how the Board give shape to and interpret the SABC's public broadcasting mandate, and provide a framework for editorial and content managers within which to operate.

The policies relate to all the SABC's content (whether produced internally or externally by an independent party), and to services directed at both national and international audiences. The policies apply to all the services offered on all SABC platforms (radio, television, online, social media, mobile device and any other platforms where the SABC's content may be accessed).

The policies are intended to assist staff to make informed decisions on editorial and content issues so that distinctive programmes can be made, while maintaining the highest ethical and editorial standards. Every member of staff (permanent, fixed-term and freelance contractors), are therefore required to study, understand and ensure compliance with these policies.

On-going professional development of SABC staff is a crucial part of the implementation of these policies. The SABC also assesses regularly the professional developmental needs arising from implementation of these policies in order to develop appropriate and on-going professional developmental programmes.

Whereas certain policies apply to specific programme areas, all the policies should be read together with Section 2: The SABC's Mandate and Section 3: Programming Policy of the SABC's Editorial Policies.

### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

This policy takes into account the Constitution and a range of legislative and regulatory requirements in particular those contained in the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act, the Broadcasting Act, and ICASA policies and regulations.

Drawing on these, the SABC commits itself to being the voice and vision of every South African.

Accordingly, the Corporation serves to:

- provide a range of distinctive, creative and top quality programmes in all 11 official languages across our radio and television portfolio, and strive to reflect the needs of each language community in our programming;
- maintain distinct and separate radio services in each of the 11 official languages;
- treat all the official languages equitably on our television services;
- integrate South African Sign Language into broadcasting as a means of making programming accessible to people with hearing disabilities;

- strive to include other non-official languages spoken in South Africa, with particular emphasis on the Khoi, Nama and San languages, where possible.

In acting on these commitments the SABC is guided by the following:

- The need for institutions, including the public broadcaster, to take practical and positive steps to treat all the official languages fairly;
- The need to address the marginalisation of indigenous languages and South African Sign Language as part of the nation building project;
- The obligation to reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity, and multilingual nature of South Africa while promoting national unity;
- The SABC's responsibility to be responsive to the needs of all South Africans, including people with disabilities;
- The importance of language in communication as the carrier of values, attitudes, culture and expression.

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The SABC's primary role is to make its programmes accessible to all the audiences, and in that regard language is fundamental to meaningful communication. In keeping with this, the SABC aims to:

- Inform, educate and entertain South Africans in their languages;
- Promote understanding and acceptance of and between the linguistic and cultural groups in South Africa;
- Contribute to continual development of the 11 official languages and South African Sign Language;
- Promote multilingualism in South Africa.

### **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

The SABC is, in terms of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act and the Broadcasting Act, required to provide broadcasting services in all the official languages and to cater specifically for the needs of people with hearing and vision disabilities. Accordingly, this is an overarching policy, affecting many activities of the Corporation.

This policy is therefore considered when the SABC:

- Develops strategic plans for the Corporation;
- Develops business plans and budgets for the Corporation;
- Formulates programme strategies, policies and plans for each radio station and television channel;
- Determines training needs and strategies;
- Develops audience research projects to gauge the needs of viewers and listeners and to assess response to programmes;
- Formulates plans for universal service and access to broadcasting;

- Investigates and formulates plans for the use of innovative technology.

## 2. THE SABC'S MANDATE

### POWERS, FUNCTIONS, RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

The SABC's mandate as a public broadcaster is derived from the Charter, which defines its objectives. The Charter is laid down in chapter IV of the Broadcasting Act and requires the SABC to encourage the development of South African expression by providing, in all eleven official languages, a wide range of programming that:

- Reflects South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity;
- Displays South African talent in educational, informational and entertainment programmes;
- Offers a plurality of views and a variety of news, information and analysis from a South African point of view;
- Advances the national and public interest.

The SABC's powers and functions, as well as its rights and obligations, are derived from a number of sources: legislation, the Charter, the licence conditions of each SABC station and channel, and regulations issued by ICASA from time to time, including the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters administered by the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (herein under referred to as BCCSA).

South Africa's broadcasting legislation provides for a three-tier licensing structure for broadcasting services: public, commercial and community. The SABC has a number of radio stations and television channels. Each has a set of licence conditions that imposes obligations, including quotas for local content and requirements for geographical coverage and language services. These are laid down by ICASA, which is responsible for monitoring compliance with the licence conditions and with the objectives of the Charter.

The SABC is required to adhere to a Code of Conduct for Broadcasters that is approved by ICASA. As a member of the National Association of Broadcasters of South Africa (NABSA), the SABC is subject to the rules of the BCCSA which ensures that broadcasters adhere to certain minimum standards of programme content.

A central tenet of the SABC's Charter is that it enjoys freedom of expression, journalistic, creativity and programming independence. The SABC Board, which is appointed by the President of the Republic of South Africa on the advice of the National Assembly, controls the affairs of the SABC and is mandated explicitly to protect the freedom and independence mentioned above.

### CORE EDITORIAL VALUES OF THE SABC

Public broadcasters worldwide share many features relating to independence, accountability and diversity. However, in the SABC context there are unique facets that also determine its positioning. These challenges are captured neatly in the preamble to the Constitutional Act, 1996, which forms the corner stone of this policy.

**Among the core editorial values for the SABC are:**

**Equality**

The SABC strives to provide programmes for everyone in all the official languages and promotes universal access to its services.

**Editorial Independence**

The SABC is governed by its Charter, which enshrines the journalistic, creative and programming independence of the corporation, the constitutionally protected freedom of expression.

**Nation Building**

The SABC celebrates South Africa's national identity and culture, and provides its citizens with the information needed to participate in building our democracy.

**Diversity**

The SABC reflects South Africa's diverse languages, cultures, values and norms in its programmes.

**Human Dignity**

The SABC respects the inherent dignity of all South Africans and does not use language or images that convey stereotypical or prejudiced notions of South Africa's races, cultures and sexes.

**Accountability**

In discharging their editorial responsibilities, SABC executives, management and staff are accountable to the SABC Board which is charged with ensuring that the Corporation complies with the Charter.

**Transparency**

The SABC ensures that principles of honesty, openness and transparency govern every aspect of its relationships with the shareholder, stakeholders, suppliers and the public.

**EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND UPWARD REFERRAL**

The scope of our programming means that the SABC has to provide consistent, relevant, useful and high-quality programming, including information and analysis. To sustain and deepen the trust the public has in the SABC, the Corporation has to maintain the highest standards of performance. The SABC requires its editorial staff to understand that with the legislated and constitutional protection of the Corporation's independence comes the responsibility to serve the public with the highest standards of excellence, care and integrity.

In this regard, subject to standard management and editorial controls, content producers and commissioning editors are responsible for both the production of the programme and the editorial management or both. Should any difficulty arise during programme production and/or editorial management or the programme producer or commissioning editor be unsure of anything, they should consult their line manager for guidance.

Should there be no resolution after such guidance from the line manager, then guidance shall be sought from the SABC's Chief Operations Officer (COO) who has the overall responsibility for SABC's content. The COO's decision on any editorial issue shall be final.

The SABC views upward referral as a mutually beneficial, nurturing and developmental approach for all the staff involved. It is not intended to move editorial decision-making upwards; it is intended, when required, to underpin collective decision-making and shared editorial responsibility, especially when staff are faced with contentious decisions as well as to underscore the interdependence of the Corporation's credibility and that of its editorial staff.

When used effectively, upward referral should be a seamless and flexible process. The earlier it is activated, the better, as this allows alternatives to be considered at the outset, instead of later, when few options are open. It is an approach that is taken by the world's premier public broadcasters. The practice of upward referral gives all staff an ideal mechanism for consultation, first with peers, and then with higher management, before taking a decision.

Should a programme producer or editor not refer an issue upward to their line manager, that programme producer or commissioning editor would be held accountable for the editorial decision so made.



### 3. PROGRAMMING

#### PREAMBLE

The mandate of the SABC is to provide relevant and diverse content. In this the Corporation is guided by:

- the Broadcasting Charter;
- the SABC's Editorial Values;
- the SABC's Editorial Code;
- BCCSA's standards and Code of Conduct.

The SABC encourages programming that is aligned to the provisions of the country's Constitution.

#### a. PROGRAMMING VALUES

In its programming the Corporation ensure compliance with broadcasting standards that are in line with the BCCSA Code of Conduct which ensures amongst other things, fair programming that is not offensive.

#### b. VIOLENCE

In addition to the requirements of the Code, the SABC's policy aims to:

- treat the subject of suicide, or attempted suicide, with circumspection, and not to give any detailed demonstration of the means of suicide;
- avoid portraying dangerous behaviour that children could easily imitate;
- use scenes of violence or cruelty to animals prudently and with adequate warning, as viewers are disturbed by such material.

The SABC's aim is not to see how much violence will be tolerated, but how little is needed to achieve honest ends without undue dramatic or editorial compromise.

#### c. CHILDREN

The starting point for the SABC's approach to children is based on the special protection afforded to those under the age of 18 by Section 28(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, "A child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child". In addition to the clauses of the Broadcast Code the SABC will:

- Play a positive role in portraying children and their rights.
- Guard against any practice that may exploit or violate the rights of children.
- Ensure that children's stories are reflected in all their diversity, paying particular attention to those stories that reflect the experiences of the majority of South Africans.

- Treat boys and girls with equal opportunities, dignity and respect.

**d. WATERSHED**

Although the Code does not specify a watershed period for radio, the SABC abides by the dictum that stations do not broadcast material that is unsuitable for children at times when they are likely to form a large part of the audience. For instance, stations should be aware that children are likely to be listening to the radio while travelling to and from school.

**e. SEXUAL CONDUCT**

In addition, the SABC's policy on the portrayal of sex and sexuality is to ensure that it is defensible in the context and presented with caution and discretion.

**f. AUDIENCE ADVISORIES**

In addition to the provisions of the Code, the SABC:

- Will make cautionary announcements verbally and/or visually before the start of programmes that could be exceptionally disturbing to certain viewers.
- Will display age indicators and warning symbols for the full duration of on-screen promos and line-ups for each programme for the full duration of the promo.

**g. CLASSIFICATION**

**Classification by Films and Publications Board**

- (1) Where a Films and Publications Board classification for a film exists in terms of the Films and Publication Act No. 65 of 1996, such classification is the minimum advisory to be used for the broadcast of the film.
- (2) No film which carries an XXX classification in terms of the Films and Publications Act may be broadcast.

**h. COMPETITIONS**

**Competitions and Audience Participation**

- (1) Where audiences are invited on air to react to a programme or competition, broadcasting service licensees must make known the full terms of reference and conditions of a telephone call or an SMS.
- (2) Broadcasting service licensees must specify the terms of reference and conditions of the call or SMS, as the case may be, which is intended for any specified charitable cause.
- (3) Broadcasting service licensees must ensure that audiences who are invited to compete in any competition are made aware on air of the rules of the competition. Such rules must include the closing date and the manner in which the winner is to be determined.

## **PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH PROGRAMME COMPLAINTS**

Complaints from members of the public that are received at the SABC and relate to matters of policy, or compliance with the Code are dealt with by the office of the Manager: Broadcast Compliance. When such complaints are received by the channels or stations or in any other department, they should be referred to that office without delay.

The SABC's policy is to deal with every such complaint. The response is either prepared in consultation with, or communicated immediately to, the management of the channel/station concerned, or the relevant head of SABC News. The services are required to take ownership of complaints about their services.

Trends in complaints and all the formal complaint processes are reported to Executive Management and Board regularly.

ICASA regulations require accurate record-keeping of all complaints received, with bi-annual reports prepared for submission to ICASA by the Broadcast Complaints Department.

## **COMPLAINTS LODGED WITH THE BROADCASTING COMPLAINTS COMMISSION OF SA**

If a member of the public lodges a formal complaint with the BCCSA about a programme broadcast on any of the SABC services, the BCCSA notifies the SABC in writing, provides a copy of the complaint, and indicates whether a copy of the programme should accompany the written response from the SABC.

When the BCCSA requests material for review in any complaint process, the SABC is obliged to provide a complete copy of the programme as broadcast. This includes any on-screen and/or verbal consumer advice. If appropriate, a transcription of the text is required, and/or the Final Control Sheet for the programme.

The Manager: Broadcast Compliance prepares the SABC's response to the complaint, in consultation with the staff responsible for the broadcast, who may be asked to provide comments in writing. This submission, together with the material requested, has to be delivered to the BCCSA's premises within ten (10) days of notification of the complaint. The formal process is then conducted in accordance with the current Procedure of the Commission (available on the Internet at <http://www.bccsa.co.za>), which may be amended from time to time. When the BCCSA gives notice that a complaint is to be heard by the Tribunal, the Manager: Broadcast Compliance:

- requests the head of the service against which the complaint has been lodged to delegate an appropriate representative to attend the hearing (normally the person responsible for the programme in question);
- applies to the SABC's Legal Services for assistance, if the BCCSA advises that the complainant will have legal representation;
- prepares the SABC's case;
- consults, or refers a case to Legal Services when the need arises;
- defends the SABC at the hearing, assisted by a legal consultant, if necessary.

When the BCCSA's decision about a complaint, adjudication (by an individual commissioner), or judgement handed down by the Tribunal is received, the Manager: Broadcast Compliance circulates it immediately to all the relevant staff.

On being found guilty of a breach of the Code, a broadcaster may be reprimanded by the Commission or required to take certain steps to rectify a situation or instructed to broadcast a correction, retraction, or apology. The BCCSA is also empowered to impose fines for serious infringements.

### **COMPLAINTS LODGED WITH THE ADVERTISING STANDARDS AUTHORITY OF SA (ASA)**

When a member of the public lodges a formal complaint with the ASA about self-promotional material broadcast on any of the SABC services, the ASA notifies the SABC in writing, provides a copy of the complaint and requests a copy of the material for review by the Authority. If the Authority finds that the complaint is not "frivolous or vexatious", the SABC may be called to a hearing and be subject to sanctions as set out in the Code of Advertising Practice.

The ASA has jurisdiction over channel and station promos that are broadcast on any other SABC service (e.g. an RSG promo flighted on SABC2, or an SABC3 promo on SAfm), or on any other broadcaster's channel/station. The ASA does not have jurisdiction over a channel/station promo broadcast on the same channel/station (e.g. an SABC3 promo flighted on SABC3) which is within the jurisdiction of the BCCSA.

The Authority therefore can entertain complaints about programme promos only if they are flighted on another broadcaster's service, if they are published in the print media, or placed on outdoor advertising (e.g. billboards).

When the ASA requests material for review in any complaint process, the SABC is obligated to provide a copy of the promo. The Manager: Broadcast Compliance requests this material from the relevant department and delivers it to the Authority within five (5) days.

### **COMPLAINTS ABOUT CONTRAVENTION OF THE SABC'S EDITORIAL POLICIES**

Members of the public and any other SABC stakeholders can lodge complaints relating to the breach of the SABC's Editorial Policies and such complaints should be directed to:

The Manager Broadcasting Compliance

Private Bag X1

Auckland Park

2006

Complaints about any breach of the SABC's Editorial Policies that are not received directly by the Policy and Regulatory Affairs department should be referred to the Manager: Broadcast Compliance without delay.

In the event of a serious contravention of editorial policy, or repeated infringement, the matter is referred upwards as follows:

- Group Executive of TV, Radio or News (depending on the nature of the complaint);
- Chief Operating Officer;

### **SPONSORSHIP OF PROGRAMMES**

The SABC is obliged to comply with ICASA's regulations on programme sponsorship.

ICASA defines programme sponsorship as direct or indirect financing, whether partial or total, of the production or transmission of broadcast programme material by an advertiser or person seeking to promote their activities or products.

ICASA regulates programme sponsorship and is concerned to ensure that editorial control remains with the broadcaster. To this end, the regulations stipulate that if there is any depiction during a sponsored programme of the name or logo of whoever provides the sponsorship, that depiction should be subordinate to the content of the programme. The regulations also provide that where there is programme sponsorship, the sponsor's association with the programme has to be stated clearly, both before and after the programme

The stations and channels, together with SABC Commercial Enterprises, ensure that the SABC is in compliance with these regulations.

## **INFOMERCIALS**

ICASA has developed rules for infomercials with which the SABC has to comply with. The rules provide that:

- infomercials may not be carried during prime time, or during children's programmes;
- infomercials must be labelled in such a way as to make it clear that they are not programme material;
- no more than two hours of infomercials per day are allowed in the performance period (05:00 - 23:00) of each channel.

In addition to the above, ICASA encourages broadcasters to ensure that infomercials are not carried on all the free-to-air channels at the same time.

The stations and channels, together with SABC Commercial Enterprises, ensure that the SABC is in compliance with these regulations.

## 4. NEWS

The BCCSA Code of Conduct for Broadcasters requires the SABC to report news truthfully, accurately and objectively.

### **CURRENT AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION PROGRAMMING**

The SABC occupies a distinctive position of trust in the lives of its viewers and listeners. The Corporation is the most extensive, all-inclusive and diverse news organisation in South Africa. The SABC considers it a duty to provide consistent, relevant, useful and top-quality information and analysis on which all South Africans can rely as they discuss and deliberate, form opinions and build a common future.

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act, the Broadcasting Act, and the BCCSA Code of Conduct for Broadcasters set out the essential requirements for news and current affairs services that are to be studied, understood and observed by every member of the SABC's news staff.

This policy covers all the news, current affairs and information programming broadcast by the SABC, including news bulletins and current affairs programmes provided for radio, television and Channel Africa.

### **OBJECTIVITY, ACCURACY, FAIRNESS, IMPARTIALITY AND BALANCE**

The SABC's right to freedom of expression comes with an obligation: the duty of every member of its news staff to uphold the highest professional and ethical standards. This includes that the SABC:

- Report, contextualise, and present news and current affairs honestly by striving to disclose all the essential facts and by not suppressing relevant, available facts, or distorting by wrong or improper emphasis.
- Do not allow its advertising, commercial interest, political or personal considerations to influence its objectivity when editorial decisions are made. The SABC is not the mouthpiece of the government of the day, nor should it broadcast its opinion of government policies, unless they relate directly to broadcasting matters.
- Seek balance by presenting relevant views on matters of importance, as far as possible. This may not always be achieved in a single programme or news bulletin, but should be done within a reasonable time. Owing to the nature and immediacy of breaking news items, the SABC will endeavour to obtain input from all relevant parties/sources when broadcasting breaking news items, but in the event that parties/sources are not immediately available for whatever reason, such input/comments will be obtained during the unfolding and more extensive coverage/reporting of the breaking news item.
- Is guided by news merit and judgement in reaching editorial decisions. Fairness does not require editorial staff to be unquestioning, nor the SABC to give every side of an issue the same amount of time.
- The SABC and its staff should not place themselves in any conflict situation which will have an effect of compromising the SABC's independence in its reporting of News and Current Affairs.
- Foster open dialogue with viewers and listeners, as the Corporation is accountable to the public for our reports.
- Aim to tell stories from a South African point of view and deal with issues that are important to South Africans. This includes local, African and global issues. The Corporation endeavours to contextualise for South Africans their life as global citizens, and to recount the story of South Africa

in all its variety and complexity. Given our history, and that South Africa is part of Africa, the SABC sees it as its responsibility to endeavour to represent Africa and African stories fairly and diversely

- Is committed to being a truly national public broadcaster, providing a showcase for all South Africa's provinces and its people.

## **LANGUAGE AND TONE IN NEWS**

The use of South African languages should always take account of the needs and sensitivities of audiences.

Further guidelines on language use are laid out in the Programming Policy and the Language Broadcasting Policy of the Corporation.

## **INTERVIEWS**

Interviews are an important tool of journalism. Interviews should be conducted in a structured manner that is aimed at achieving a specific goal and this can be achieved by conducting proper research prior to the interview.

Therefore it is important to inform an interviewee of the purpose of the interview, its duration and any other relevant matter, and to establish how he or she prefers to be addressed.

## **ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS NEWS**

SABC News gives special attention to economics and business news aimed at informing and educating our audiences. Examples are business, commercial and labour laws; harmful business practices; effective ways of saving and spending money; prices, inflation and other basic economic indicators, and how these affect our audiences.

In commissioning and broadcasting economics and business news, SABC news staff should ensure that a range of views, perspectives and opinions - not only the orthodox ones - are presented in a balanced, fair and accurate manner and are well informed.

## **INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM**

The SABC investigative journalism plays a vital part in pursuing matters of public interest systematically through innovative and reliable journalism, making it possible to access information that is crucial to the construction of a democratic society.

Given its nature, investigative journalism frequently involves legal considerations, and on such occasions the advice of the Legal Department is to be sought.

Clandestine methods of gathering news and information should be used with due regard of the law, the right to privacy, and the significance of the information bearing in mind that in some instances public interest takes precedence. If it were to become necessary and in the public interest to gather information to which the public normally does not have access, the matter should be referred to the GE: News and Current Affairs.

## **USE OF GUESTS, ANALYSTS AND SPECIALIST COMMENTATORS**

The SABC's principle of providing the full spectrum of opinions, perspectives and comment also applies to selection and use of guests, analysts and specialist commentators. This requires editorial staff to select, as participants, people who have a wide range of views, opinions and perspectives, and are drawn from all over the country. Such people should be required to declare any vested interest they may have in the matter to be discussed.

The views expressed by guests, analysts and/or specialist commentators remain their views albeit expressed on a SABC platform as they were for purposes of discussion during an SABC News or Current Affairs programme.

### **PAYING FOR INFORMATION**

The BCCSA Code of Conduct prohibits broadcasters from paying criminals for information, unless compelling societal interests indicate the contrary. As a matter of policy, the SABC does not pay people for information. In circumstances where compelling public interest and the right to know are involved, and access to information cannot be gained by other means, the matter is to be referred to the GE: News and Current Affairs for a decision.

### **PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS**

Polling and random sampling are methods used to discover facts, uncover attitudes and confirm hypotheses. However, to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings of such research, it has to be done according to proven scientific research methods. Before broadcasting the results of non-SABC surveys, journalists should obtain information on the methods used and the main results of the survey; seek the opinion of experts in the field, and consult SABC Market Intelligence on the validity of the methods used and interpretation of the findings.

The SABC may also conduct its own public opinion surveys, for which it takes full accountability. The Manager of News Research must approve any such survey, including the design, questionnaires and interpretation of the results, after consultation with the GE: News and Current Affairs. Statements gathered (live or pre-recorded) from people chosen at random - vox pops - are not scientific surveys. These should be presented solely to illustrate the range and texture of popular opinion on a topical issue. There should not be any suggestion - explicit or implicit - that the views broadcast in such a survey reflect wider public opinion.

### **PROTECTION OF SOURCES**

The SABC firmly upholds the principle of journalistic freedom and the protection of a journalist's sources as a key element of this principle. At times, information that ought to be given to the public is available to journalists only through confidential sources. If the confidentiality of such sources of information were not respected, it would restrict the free flow of information in a free, open and democratic society.

In the event of a source not wanting to be identified publicly, the SABC uses the information obtained only when the source is known to the journalist and has prima facie credibility; the journalist has checked the reliability of the source and obtained corroboratory evidence from other relevant sources; and the identity and bona fides of the confidential source have been disclosed to the relevant Executive Producer ahead of the broadcast.



When protection of a source becomes a legal matter, the SABC does not advise its staff to refuse to obey an order of a court, but makes its legal counsel available for advice and to present legal argument in court to protect the source.

## **GENDER AND REPRESENTATION**

The SABC will endeavour to have News and Current Affairs programming that are gender sensitive and balanced so as to ensure equal, fair and proper treatment of all people regardless of gender and/or sexual orientation. This will include, amongst others, ensuring that a gender balanced view is obtained on all matters that affect a certain gender.

## **PRIVACY**

The Programming Policy expands on the SABC's approach to matters of privacy.

## **REPORTING ON SUFFERING AND DISTRESS**

In terms of the SABC Editorial Code the Corporation is circumspect in the presentation of brutality, violence, atrocities and personal grief.

When covering any accident, disaster or conflict the SABC always gives a full, accurate and factual account of relevant matters such as time, location and casualty figures as it can be reasonably verified at the time. In doing so, the Corporation avoids causing needless distress or anxiety to those who already know of their loss. SABC editorial staff cover accidents and disasters with compassion and sensitivity that is frank and genuine.

The consequences of a tragic event or disaster call for considerable sensitivity on the part of the SABC. Reporting on these events should follow well established principles:

- As a rule, intrusive visuals of the dead should not be broadcast unless it is impossible to report on a story without using such visuals;
- Those injured or grieving should not be put under any pressure to give interviews;
- As far as reasonably possible, next of kin should not first learn bad news from a radio or TV newscast;
- A funeral should be covered only with the permission of the family, and treated sensitively and without intrusion, unless public interest dictates otherwise;
- The time of day of transmission - before or after the watershed - and audience sensibilities should always be considered;
- In cases where programming or content that carries sensitive material or is not age appropriate is to be broadcast, viewers should be given prior warning.

News bulletins should be prepared bearing in mind that children watch TV during the day and early evening, especially during school holidays. This could mean delaying graphic details and visuals of particularly disturbing events until the later bulletins, when it is reasonable to expect parents to be in a better position to monitor their children's viewing.

The guidelines are elaborated on further in the Programming Policy. Editorial staff should also consult the Legal Guidelines for Editorial Staff.

## **BROADCASTING EVENTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE**

The SABC gives full or extended live television and/or radio coverage of events of national importance. In scheduling these events, editorial staff should take into account that they inevitably result in schedule changes. Such events may include the opening of Parliament, the budget speech, State occasions such as visits by foreign dignitaries and State funerals; major commemorative events and the proceedings of national commissions of inquiry.

Other events that may warrant live coverage and involve scheduling and programming changes include major parliamentary debates, the opening of provincial legislatures, and significant conferences of the major political parties. Live coverage in this category requires approval of the relevant stations and channels in consultation with top management.

When an event of national importance is of a party political nature, editorial staff are to ensure that the SABC policies on objectivity, accuracy, fairness, impartiality and balance are adhered to.

The Policy on Language Broadcasting outlines further requirements for broadcasting events of national importance.

## **ELECTION BROADCASTS**

The news policy is applicable both during elections and outside of elections. Outside of elections, the SABC approaches its coverage of political parties as it does with all other newsmakers. The Corporation is guided by its commitment to objectivity, accuracy, fairness, impartiality and balance. As such this policy does not deal specifically with the coverage of political parties outside of an election period as stipulated in the Independent Electoral Commission's policy guidelines.

Election broadcasts are regulated by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act and regulations governing election periods. During an election period, the SABC is bound to comply with additional ICASA guidelines on equitable coverage of political parties, as a result, business entities, organisations and any stakeholders may not utilise the Corporation's platforms to advance individual or group interests during or outside election periods.

The Corporation's News staff are required to study, understand and observe the statutory provisions on election broadcasts in the applicable legislation. These requirements include the limitations on party election broadcasts, the time to be made available to political parties and scheduling of party election broadcasts, and political advertising during election periods. The SABC shall, in compliance with the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act, cease party election broadcasts 48 hours before the polling period begins.

## 5. LANGUAGES

As South Africa's public broadcaster, the SABC embraces the constitutional duty to treat all the official languages equitably, and with equal respect. The Constitution also recognises the need to promote South African Sign Language and indigenous languages.

The SABC's language Policy is derived from the Corporation's commitment to freedom of expression, which is protected by the Constitution, including the right of all South Africans to receive and impart information. The Corporation recognises that freedom of expression can be realised fully only when as far as reasonably possible every South African can inform and be informed in their language of choice. Access to meaningful information would also empower South Africans to participate effectively in every facet of society.

### USE OF LANGUAGE IN BROADCASTING

In fulfilling its duty to protect and nurture South Africa's official languages, the SABC strives to ensure that they are all spoken correctly. In doing so the SABC commits itself to celebrating the rich diversity of dialects and accents in each language group.

Moreover, language usage should accord with the programme genre. It is fair to assume that more formal language would be used in news programmes, whereas more conversational, colloquial or everyday language would be used in drama.

Language in broadcasting should also take account of the social expectations and values of different language groups, and the right of every South African to be treated with respect and dignity. Language usage in broadcasting should therefore avoid giving offence and causing hurt unnecessarily. It should encourage respect and concern for everyone, and be free of elements such as prejudice, racist and sexist connotations. The Programming Policy and the Policy on News, Current Affairs and Information Programming expand further on this issue.

### LANGUAGE OPERATING PRINCIPLES

In striving to play its part in reaching these common national goals, the SABC's Language Broadcasting Policy takes into account the:

- Use of groupings such as cognate, shared and widely understood languages so as to make the most cost effective use of scarce resources;
- Special action on marginalised languages;
- Attainment of language goals, including the use of South African Sign Language, in targeted programme genres;
- Combined use of unilingual and multilingual programming;
- Coverage of events of national importance to promote the development of national identity, social cohesion and nation building;
- Fair allocation of resources to achieve quality in programmes on all the broadcasting platforms;
- Application of appropriate technologies to achieve language coverage and access goals;
- Use of research to understand audiences' language broadcasting needs;
- Introduction of annual plans to focus implementation and monitoring of the Language Policy;

- Development of mutually beneficial relationships with key social partners, notably the Pan African Language Board.

## **RADIO**

Radio is still the most widely used and most accessible broadcasting medium in South Africa. As audiences have fragmented increasingly into niche markets there has been an increased responsibility on the SABC, as the public broadcaster, to offer South Africans a wide range of programmes — irrespective of age, income or language. Accordingly, the SABC is charged with providing quality radio services in all 11 official languages. In making this pledge the SABC notes the:

- crucial part radio plays in the lives of many South Africans, as it is often the only medium available to them in their home language, and in many instances the only medium available at all;
- importance of investment in indigenous African language services as part of the nation-building project and developing social cohesion;
- unique part radio can play in promoting people's right to receive information, to express themselves, and to inform others.

## **PROGRAMMING GUIDELINES**

A language service should be sensitive to and reflect the needs and lifestyles of the speakers of that language — including those of children, young people, urban and rural dwellers, and the elderly:

- A language service should provide programming in genres such as news and information, children's/educational programmes, and entertainment;
- Programmes should aim to reflect the realities of the target audience, while recognising their right to a wide range of programming from throughout South Africa and the world;
- Programmes should aim to foster unity.

## **CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES**

The Broadcasting Act requires the SABC to meet children's programming needs. Children require informative, educational and entertaining programmes of excellent quality, in their home language, aimed specifically at addressing their needs and instilling a sense of pride in their culture and language. These needs vary according to the circumstances and ages of children, from pre-school to school going and adolescence.

Radio programmes have a supportive role in nurturing and developing children's language capacity, cultural knowledge and experiences. Programmes can also assist in promoting understanding between children of different language and cultural communities.

The SABC should address the needs of children in its language radio services by offering programmes that cater specifically for them. The Programming Policy gives more information on children's programmes.

## **ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES**

The SABC commits itself to ensuring fair allocation of financial and other resources to the language services so that they can meet the requirements of broadcasting programmes of excellent quality.

The SABC takes into account that radio remains for many the only medium available for receiving essential education and information, and good quality entertainment. Special attention should therefore be paid to developing and expanding programmes on services that target historically disadvantaged communities.

## **UNIVERSAL ACCESS**

Through its Universal Service and Access Policy, which is described separately, the SABC ensures that its language services are accessible to South Africans who speak those languages.

## **TELEVISION**

The SABC is committed to treating all the official languages equitably on television. This is achieved across the television portfolio as a whole, not on each individual channel. The SABC aims to meeting the air-time quotas of official languages in local programming.

Since prime time (18:00-22:00) is relatively short, the SABC is committed to considering and implementing innovative strategies for providing programmes equitably in all the official languages. One such strategy being implemented is to schedule programmes in different languages on and across SABC television channels in a complementary way.

## **LANGUAGE**

In fulfilling its mandate to provide television programmes in all the official languages, the SABC takes into account the following:

- The Constitutional requirement to treat all the official languages equitably;
- The comparatively little television air time available, especially in prime time, and the complexities of allocating time equitably to all the languages;
- The similarities and differences between the official languages; for example, certain languages are part of a cognate group (languages that are mutually understandable within that group), others are not cognate but shared and understood by different communities, whereas some are neither mutually understandable nor widely spoken. In addition, some language communities are much bigger than others;
- The unique potential of television to showcase cultures and languages creatively; to nurture people's knowledge and experience of one another, and to contribute to developing a national identity.

## **GUIDELINES FOR EQUITABLE TREATMENT**

- The SABC envisage broadcasting in every official language on television, while ensuring that programmes are accessible to as many viewers as possible. The Corporation aims at complementing its national television service by providing regional services as required by the Broadcasting Act, license conditions of these services and any other regulations.

- Equity is achieved through a combination of means, including unilingual productions and multilingual programmes. The Corporation strives to explore the use of technologies such as subtitling to ensure that programmes are accessible to as many viewers as possible.

In striving to achieve equity, the following factors are considered:

- The overall time allocated to each language;
- Scheduling of programmes when members of the target audiences are available;
- The range of programme genres available in each language;
- Financial and other resources for programmes in each of the official languages.

In determining allocation of time to each language, the SABC has due regard to:

- The number of home language speakers in the coverage area of a channel;
- The geographical spread of the language;
- The extent to which members of a language community are able to understand other languages;
- The extent of marginalisation of the language;
- The extent to which it is understood by other South Africans;
- Available resources.

These criteria are intended to ensure that all the languages receive some air time, but not necessarily in equal amounts. Moreover, when these criteria are applied effectively, the SABC dedicates a greater amount of programme time to more widely spoken or shared languages, while committing itself to special projects for marginalised languages.

## **TELEVISION PROGRAMMING**

For television programming, the SABC commits itself to the following principles:

- to broadcast a range of top quality programmes in each of the official languages in order to meet the information, education and entertainment needs of audiences comprehensively.
- to produce and screen news and information, children's educational programmes, and drama in different languages, while not neglecting other genres;
- to ensure that programmes in specific languages are broadcast at times to suit most of the members of the target audience in that language community;
- to broadcast programmes in the different languages that reflect the needs, lifestyles and circumstances of speakers of that language, including the children, young people, urban and rural dwellers, and the elderly;
- Scheduling of programmes across the SABC channels should be sensitive to audiences' right to have access to a range of programmes in their home language, and in languages they understand. To this end, television programmes across the channels are scheduled in a complementary manner;

- Programmes are aimed at fostering unity and a common South African identity, instead of separateness, and at promoting cross-cultural knowledge, appreciation and understanding. The Corporation believes that the country's diverse language groups and regions should be reflected to the nation and to themselves;
- The SABC creatively combines unilingual and multilingual programmes, and uses broadcasting technologies such as subtitling, to reach its language goals.

### **UNILINGUAL PROGRAMMES**

The SABC ensures that across the television portfolio some programmes are dedicated to each official language. A programme would be classified as being in an official language if most of the programme were in that language.

### **MULTILINGUAL PROGRAMMES**

The SABC is conscious of the part multilingual programmes can play in promoting knowledge and understanding of the country's diversity of languages and cultures. Such programmes, when used creatively, also reach out to wider audiences.

Accordingly, the SABC actively encourages production of meaningful multilingual programmes as a means of attaining its language broadcasting objectives. Multilingual programmes are those that include substantial amounts of more than one official language.

### **CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES**

Children require informative, educational and entertaining programming of excellent quality, in their home language, that is aimed specifically at addressing their needs and instilling a sense of pride in their culture and language. These needs vary according to the circumstances and ages of children, from pre-school to adolescence.

The SABC aims to broadcast a range of top quality educational, informative and entertaining television programmes for children of different age groups that are responsive to their language needs. This can be accomplished by means such as dubbing, multilingual programming and subtitling that is age appropriate.

When acquiring and broadcasting children's programmes the SABC takes children's language requirements into account. More information on children's programmes is detailed in the Programming Policy.

### **DRAMA**

Drama provides a unique means of telling our South African stories and learning from and about one another. The SABC broadcasts top quality South African television dramas that collectively reflect South African languages and cultures. The Corporation also undertakes to investigate innovative and creative ways of ensuring that such dramas are accessible to as wide a range of audiences as possible, such as multilingual productions, subtitling, and dubbing.

### **MEETING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

The SABC is committed to responding to the broadcasting needs of all its audiences. Responding effectively to the needs of people with disabilities is an important part of our mandate. The SABC develops specific plans to facilitate access to its broadcasts for people with disabilities.

Broadcasting of programmes in South African Sign Language, as a recognised South African language, is one of the means of meeting the needs of people with hearing disabilities. While the broadcasting of Sign Language interpretation facilitates access to programming by the deaf and hard of hearing it also creates knowledge and understanding of South Africa's substantial deaf and hard of hearing community, and so contributes to nation building.

The SABC progressively expands the amount of programming that is signed, beginning with selected news and current affairs, and events of national importance. Special efforts are being made to provide Sign Language interpretation when programmes are recorded in front of live audiences. Such efforts facilitate participation by people from the deaf and hard of hearing communities in such programmes.

While focusing on providing programming that is signed, the SABC also acknowledges that a holistic approach is needed to address the needs of the deaf community. In this regard, closed captioning may offer a viable solution. The SABC will continue to explore various technology options which may assist in providing a holistic approach in addressing the needs of the deaf community.

In meeting the broadcasting needs of South Africa's community of people with visual disabilities specifically, the SABC undertakes to investigate the use of innovative technologies such as audio-description.

## **ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES**

The SABC acknowledges that it is faced with limited air time and other broadcasting resources. In order to achieve its language broadcasting objectives, the SABC undertakes to achieve fair and equitable allocation of financial and other resources when commissioning and airing programmes in the official languages.

## **UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS**

The Broadcasting Act requires that, as circumstances permit, a range of programmes in South Africa's official languages should be extended to all South Africans. The SABC undertakes to pursue this objective with regard to television, through its Universal Service and Access Policy.

## **RESEARCH**

The needs and demographics of our language communities are changing and evolving continually. Since the SABC is committed to serving the broadcasting needs of these communities, it undertakes to research these needs regularly, and to ensure that such research informs its programming and scheduling strategies. The SABC also makes use of research to assess whether the strategies and innovations it implements meet audience expectations adequately.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

The SABC recognises that technology offers innovative means of meeting the challenges of broadcasting in the country's official languages and South African Sign Language. The SABC therefore commits itself to undertaking relevant research into the creative use of technologies to facilitate



implementation of its mandate. Innovative technology research is encouraged in order to keep broadcasting in line with the market.

## 6. UNIVERSAL SERVICE ACCESS

Since there is no definition of Universal Service and Access for broadcasting, this policy includes a definition of Broadcasting Universal Service and Access.

The SABC understands Broadcasting Universal Service and Access to mean:

"Provision of a range of audio and video broadcasting services to citizens throughout the Republic. The services shall include, but are not limited to, radio and television programmes that cater for information, cultural, religious and educational needs and are delivered via the most appropriate technical means available at an affordable price to broadcasters and audiences alike."

### AIMS FOR BROADCASTING UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS

The SABC's planning for expansion of coverage takes account of relevant demographic data and urbanisation trends.

The SABC also has to consider how to prioritise allocation of resources to extend coverage of the full range of public broadcasting services when, for instance, a huge investment in infrastructure results in reaching only a very few people, or provides a social but not a financial return. In each case, the extent of the proposed coverage, the number of people to be reached by the expansion, the extent of need of those people, the cost of the expansion, the nature of the service to be provided by the expansion, and frequency availability, among other things, will determine the feasibility of investing in transmission extension.

### PRINCIPLES FOR ACHIEVING BROADCASTING UNIVERSAL SERVICE AND ACCESS

In achieving these aims, the SABC is guided by the principles set out below.

**The SABC together with the relevant partners in the value chain share responsibility for the South African broadcasting system as a whole.**

The principle established in national policy, legislation and regulations is that achieving Universal Service and Access is not solely the SABC's responsibility. Policy pronouncements affirmed consistently that Universal Service and Access is the responsibility of the South African broadcasting system as a whole. This includes other categories of broadcasting licensees, such as commercial and community broadcasters, as well as signal distributors. Policy and legislation specifically indicates that the signal distribution sector must provide universal access for all South Africans to broadcast services.

The SABC's responsibility is to define its contribution to Broadcasting Universal Service and Access. It therefore should provide regular reports of its achievements against its stated aims.

The SABC also liaises regularly with other stakeholders who share the responsibility for extending Broadcasting Universal Service and Access. These are primarily Sentech, ICASA, the Department of Communications, the Universal Service Agency of South Africa and Media Development and Diversity Agency.

**Achievement of Broadcasting Universal Service and Access is subject to the financial resources available.**

Broadcasting legislation recognises that resources to finance provision of the public broadcasting services are limited. The principle established applies to both public service obligations and achievement of Universal Service and Access. For instance, Section 3(4) of the Broadcasting Act of 1999, provides that "the broadcasting system as a whole must provide educational programming, and

where such programming is provided by a dedicated education service, must be extended throughout the Republic within the financial resources". Regarding commercial services, Section 30(d) of the Broadcasting Act of 1999 provides that: "commercial broadcasting services, when viewed collectively, must within a reasonable period of time be extended to all South Africans and provide comprehensive coverage of the areas which they are licensed to serve". Another section of the Broadcasting Act that makes the provision of services conditional on availability of resources is section 3(6), which says: "a range of programming in the Republic's official languages must be extended to all South Africans as circumstances permit".

Likewise, the SABC's approach to achieving Broadcasting Universal Service and Access has to take account of the financial resources available. In this approach, the SABC should strive for economic efficiency while achieving the maximum in terms of service delivery targets. As the SABC migrates from analogue to digital, the financial implications of dual illumination will need to be factored into our planning.

The SABC's approach takes cognisance of the approach to national development set out in the National Development Plan. Therefore aims have been fixed to guide planning and implementation that is co-ordinated to attain economic efficiency while achieving maximum impact on targets of service delivery. In practice, this would mean, for example, that as roll-out of the electricity grid advanced, detailed planning for expansion of TV coverage could be closely co-ordinated to occur as electricity became available.

**The interoperability of systems and delivery platforms is the key to achieving Broadcasting Universal Service and Access.**

Optimal solutions for expansion of coverage promised by the advent of digital broadcasting, across any of the delivery platforms (satellite, terrestrial or cable), are technically possible and financially feasible only if the networks and operating systems are interoperable.

## **MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

As the need to achieve Broadcasting Universal Service and Access affects many areas of the SABC, the Board requires management to determine responsibility within the Corporation for driving implementation of this policy.

The Board also requires management to submit an annual action plan for Broadcasting Universal Service and Access, outlining goals and resources required. This would ensure that dynamic changes in the industry did not make plans redundant. It would also allow harnessing of technological developments to assist in attainment of Broadcasting Universal Service and Access. A summary of the previous year's achievements should be attached to this plan, including:

- A report of the SABC's achievements in terms of Broadcasting Universal Service and Access against the stated aims, including reasons for achieving or failing to achieve them;
- A breakdown of the services extended in the previous year, including the increase in population coverage of those services and the cost of the expansion.

Relevant aspects of these reports are included in the Corporation's Annual Report to Parliament.

## 7. LOCAL CONTENT

As South Africa's public broadcaster, the SABC is firmly committed to supporting the South African music and production industries by airing local television programmes and South African music. The SABC believes that South African music and television content play a key part in reflecting and celebrating our country's diverse people and cultures. Local content on the public broadcaster helps to restore a sense of pride and dignity in local music, performance, film and the arts. This, in turn, assists in furthering important public interest goals such as nation-building and social cohesion.

### REQUIREMENTS AND COMMITMENTS

Various regulatory and legislative requirements applicable to the SABC in terms of local content were taken into account in developing this policy. They include those of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act, the Broadcasting Act, and relevant ICASA regulations. Specifically, the SABC is guided by the following:

- The requirement that broadcasting services, viewed collectively, develop and protect national and regional identity, culture and character;
- The obligation of the SABC to take into account the needs of its audiences;
- The requirement that the SABC display South African talent;
- The requirement that the SABC reflect South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity;
- The need to support the production of local content by South Africans; particularly by historically disadvantaged people;
- The specific quotas set by ICASA for local television content, independent production and South African music on the SABC's public and commercial services.

In accordance with those obligations, the SABC commits itself to the following:

- To ensure that local television content is a significant and visible part of its schedules, throughout the broadcasting period and in prime time, in line with the quotas prescribed by ICASA;
- To ensure that it commissions a significant amount of its local television content from the independent production industry, in line with the quotas prescribed by ICASA;
- To continue to play a high level and wide variety of South African music across the SABC radio stations, in line with the quotas prescribed by ICASA.

### SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The imperative to deliver significant levels of local content has a direct impact on all the SABC radio stations and television channels. These services are bound to comply with the ICASA regulations and licence conditions on local content. This Local Content Policy should be read together with those requirements and applies to all the SABC's radio and television services. It is the responsibility of the licensees — the radio stations and television channels — to comply with local content quotas. These platforms prescribe and agree the proportions of local content with internal suppliers, including the content hub, news, education and sport.

### The policy should be considered when the SABC:

- Develops strategic plans and/or Key Performance Indicators for the Corporation;
- Develops business plans and budgets for the Corporation and its services;
- Formulates programme strategies, policies and plans for each station/channel.

## TELEVISION

### Definition of Local Television Content

**Local television** content is defined in the **Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act**<sup>1</sup> as a television programme (excluding broadcasts of sports events and compilations of them, advertisements, teletext and continuity announcements) that is produced by a South African broadcaster, or by South African people.

### DEFINITION OF INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION

Also in the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act, an **independent production**<sup>2</sup> is defined as a production of local television content by a person who is not employed directly or indirectly by a broadcaster, or by a person who is not controlled by, or in control of, any broadcasting licensee.

### Local Content Quotas

Like all broadcasters, the SABC is bound by the local content and independent production quotas prescribed by ICASA. There are three sets of quotas for television:

- **Global local content quotas** for each television channel. These stipulate that a percentage of the air time between 05:00 and 23:00 should be allocated to local content. The global quotas distinguish between public and commercial television.
- **Genre quotas**. These stipulate that if a television channel carries a certain genre of programming (such as drama), a percentage of that type of programming is to be allocated to local content. The genres are defined in the ICASA regulations and span the following six areas: drama, informal knowledge building, children, education, documentary and current affairs. In each case a minimum percentage is prescribed. These quotas also distinguish between public and commercial television.
- **Independent production quotas**. Here the stipulation is that a percentage of the total amount of local content aired must be allocated to independent television productions. These quotas make no distinction between public and commercial services.

All the quotas are set out in regulations which may be reviewed by ICASA every three years.

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<sup>1</sup> ICASA has proposed that all local content definitions be removed from the Act and be published in Regulations

<sup>2</sup> ICASA has proposed an amendment to this definition to also exclude a person controlled by a controlling shareholder of a broadcasting licensee.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH QUOTAS**

It is the responsibility of each television channel to ensure that they comply with the local content quotas. Scheduling Managers in the channels send their schedules to the Policy and Regulatory Affairs Department monthly. Policy and Regulatory Affairs works with the channels to ensure consistency in the designation and measurement of local content, and adequate forecasting to identify any potential difficulties in meeting the quotas.

Policy and Regulatory Affairs consolidates the information received from channels and compiles it into reports that are submitted to top management. Annual local content compliance figures are published in the Corporation's Annual Report to Parliament.

## **THE SABC'S APPROACH TO LOCAL CONTENT ON TELEVISION**

The following principles underpin the SABC's approach to local content on television:

- The SABC undertakes to broadcast a range of good quality local productions. This means the television portfolio as a whole airs local content in a variety of genres and programme types, targeted at different audiences.
- The SABC is eager to support development of television content on the African continent and, if possible, will endeavour to showcase such material.
- The SABC recognises that it is the industry's biggest investor in skills development. Aligned to its investment in local content is a commitment to investing in empowerment and skills development processes that benefit the industry at large.
- The SABC strives to engage more fruitfully with partner organisations in the film and television industry in order to support development and transformation of the local production industry.

## **RADIO**

### **DEFINITION OF SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC**

South African music is defined in the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act. In order to qualify as South African music, a musical work must adhere to the following criteria:

- The lyrics are written by a South African citizen;
- The music is composed by a South African citizen;
- The music and/or lyrics are performed principally by musicians who are South African citizens;
- The musical work is a live performance recorded wholly in South Africa, or performed wholly in South Africa, and broadcast live in South Africa.

### **QUOTAS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC**

The SABC's music stations are bound to comply with the South African music quotas prescribed by ICASA. These quotas stipulate that a percentage of the tracks played between 05:00 and 23:00 are to be South African. A distinction is made between public service and commercial radio. The quotas are reviewed by ICASA every three years.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH QUOTAS**

It is the responsibility of each radio station to ensure that they comply with the local content quotas applicable to them. They are assisted by the SABC's Policy and Regulatory Affairs department in reporting their compliance to ICASA. Monthly compliance reports are made to top management, and annual figures are published in the Corporation's Annual Report to Parliament.

### **THE SABC'S APPROACH TO SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC ON RADIO**

The following principles underpin the SABC's support for South African music:

- ICASA makes a distinction between the level of local content expected from public service stations and from commercial stations, and has set a higher quota for public service stations.
- With 18 radio stations broadcasting in all the official languages, and in a range of formats, SABC radio stations are uniquely placed to showcase the wide range of musical expression in South Africa.
- Whereas the allocation of air time to South African music will always be the primary means of supporting local music, the SABC believes there are a number of other equally effective interventions that SABC radio stations are able to make in support of local music. SABC radio publicises local musicians through interviews, reviews and promotions.
- One of the greatest challenges facing SABC radio stations is to provide sufficient good quality local material in all music formats. This continues to have a direct effect on the stations' ability to meet their quotas. Towards addressing this concern, the SABC works with relevant forums such as the South African Music Forum convened by ICASA. The SABC hopes that through this work the broadcasting and music industries will be able to develop strategies jointly to address the issues of supply in South African music;
- The SABC strives to support the development of music on the African continent, and where possible will showcase such music.

### **MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The Board requires management to submit an annual local content action plan that identifies future goals arising from this policy. A summary of achievements of the previous year is to be attached to the local content action plan in order to facilitate a review of the achievements, opportunities and challenges.

## 8. RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING

South Africa is a multicultural and multiple faith society that is united by a common humanity and moral order. Within its diversity there are human values that call for the promotion of social harmony, national healing, reconciliation, social reconstruction and nation building.

Most South Africans acknowledge the Divine, which is expressed through a variety of religious beliefs and practices, and religious institutions. The SABC has an obligation to provide religious programmes and to broadcast religious material in a manner that is unbiased and representative of South Africa's religious plurality. In so doing, the SABC seeks to promote mutual respect for religious beliefs among the country's different religious groups.

In its religious programming, the SABC seeks to ensure that the distinctive identities of the religious traditions are broadcast in a way that facilitates the religious and moral objectives of justice, social harmony and the common good. Religious programming should play a meaningful part in the moral regeneration of South Africa.

### **Religious broadcasting should be undertaken in accordance with values that include:**

- Sensitivity to the diverse nature of South African society and the need for justice, healing and reconciliation;
- Compassion and concern for human dignity and for all life, including the earth;
- Common South African good;
- Integrity, transparency and trust in all relationships;
- Commitment to the independence and autonomy of the SABC, within the parameters of its accountability to the South African public.

### **NATURE AND CONTENT OF RELIGIOUS PROGRAMMES**

#### **The following principles underpin the SABC's approach to religious programming:**

- In achieving its religious programming mandate, the SABC provides both faith specific and multi-faith programmes. Faith specific programmes should give the major religious groups the scope to celebrate their life of faith and understanding of the Divine fully and without censure. Multi-faith programmes are in addition to faith specific programmes and should promote religious dialogue, respect and understanding among all the religious groupings in South Africa. The vehicles for delivery of religious programmes are the radio stations and TV channels in the SABC's public broadcasting portfolio.
- Whereas religious broadcasts have necessarily to comply with the SABC's Policy on Programming, the SABC takes particular care to ensure that in such programmes there is sensitivity to the beliefs of others, and that no religion is either attacked or undermined in such programmes.
- Religious broadcasting may not be used to request money from audiences, nor to support any programme of a political or ideological nature. Permission for fundraising, whether for emergency relief and/or social welfare, or for religious causes, should be obtained from the SABC before the broadcast.
- The theological content of meditational and worship programmes is at the discretion of the presenter, as a member of a particular religious organisation, but should comply with the Policy on Religious Broadcasting and other relevant SABC policies.



- The format of religious programmes and the choice of presenters should meet the technical, creative and professional criteria required by the SABC.
- The SABC provides religious programmes in a variety of formats including documentaries, magazines and actuality programmes. The aim of these is to encourage religious comment on matters of national concern, and to introduce people to faiths practised in South Africa and, where appropriate, elsewhere.
- The SABC sources religious programmes through its standard content procurement procedures including commissioning, licensing and /or content that may be acquired at no cost to the Corporation or the supplier.
- Religious broadcasting should strive to be contextual and relevant, and to reflect our African reality. Towards further correction of the neglect of African culture in the public media, special attention is given to African Religion and traditional cultures.
- Religious programmes should take account of regional factors, target audiences, language and cultural preferences, and the devotional needs of specific groups.

### **PAID BROADCASTING**

In addition to its normal provision of religious programmes, the SABC may make air time available for purchasing by religious groups for broadcasting of religious material. The sale of such air time would be negotiated on a commercial basis and be guided by the following:

- The sale of air time to religious groups may in no way detract from the SABC's mandate to provide religious programming.
- The sale of air time to particular religious groups should be consistent with the time allocated to those groups, as determined every three years. Within this, the SABC shall also ensure that there is a fair representation of various denominations in religious groups.
- Religious material broadcast in slots that have been sold to religious groups is always to be consistent with the SABC's Policy on Religious Broadcasting and all the other relevant policies. The SABC reserves the right to accept or reject an offer to purchase air time based on the material proposed.
- In considering offers to purchase air time, the SABC gives preference to good quality local material.
- Profits from the sale of air time to religious groups should be directed to the funding of religious programmes.
- Scheduling of such air time is the prerogative of the SABC.
- Sponsorship, fundraising, advertising and commercial branding in air time sold to religious groups are governed by the rules of SABC Commercial Enterprises.
- Operational Guidelines to guide transactions on air time sales are available on request.
- These programmes will also have to meet the editorial standards directed by the SABC.

### **MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The Board requires management to submit an annual religious broadcasting action plan that identifies future goals arising from this policy. A summary of achievements from the previous year is to be attached in order to facilitate a review of the achievements, opportunities and challenges.

## 9. EDUCATION

The SABC is required by legislation to inform, educate and entertain viewers and listeners. The broadcasting of educational programmes is therefore essential to the implementation of its public service mandate.

The SABC recognises that to right the wrongs inflicted by decades of apartheid education on the knowledge, literacy and skills profile of South Africa requires the collective contribution of all educational authorities, institutions and individuals. The SABC recognises that through broadcasting, it can make a unique contribution to this national project. Complementary to what is offered by schools, colleges, higher education institutions and work place training, radio and television can make the most significant contribution to learning.

The SABC also acknowledges that an informed and educated citizenry is fundamental to the sustained development of South Africa. Through its educational programmes it is well placed to advance national goals of equality, dignity and an inclusive society and works towards these ends.

In fulfilling its educational mandate, the SABC is guided by the constitutionally enshrined right of all South Africans to receive education — in the official languages of their choice, where reasonably practicable. The SABC also aims to attain the goals set in the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act and the Broadcasting Act, and the relevant policies and regulations. In particular, the SABC takes into account the requirement of the Broadcasting Act that the SABC's public broadcasting services should:

"include significant amounts of educational programming, both curriculum-based and informal educative topics from a wide range of social, political and economic issues, including, but not limited to, human rights, health, early childhood development, agriculture, culture, justice and commerce and contributing to a shared South African consciousness and identity".

This Policy on Educational Broadcasting sets the framework within which the SABC implements this mandate and responds to the national literacy and skills development challenge.

### OBJECTIVES

#### The SABC commits itself to:

- provide innovative educational programmes of excellent quality across our radio and television services, aimed at meeting the diverse formal and informal learning needs of all our audiences, including children, youth and adults. These include:
  - Programmes that support the curriculum-based activities of the education and training sectors and cover a wide range of subjects and fields;
  - Programmes that promote public education on rural development and urban renewal, human resources development, citizens' rights and responsibilities, healthy living, innovative solutions to personal, family and community challenges, national identity, culture and heritage;
- ensure that the radio and television services in the SABC's public broadcasting portfolio devote adequate air time to educational programmes, and schedule them at times that are appropriate for the target audiences;
- ensure that the radio and television services in the commercial portfolio support a culture of lifelong learning through informal knowledge-building initiatives that are relevant to their format and target audience;

- provide educational programmes in various of the official languages and, in selected genres, Sign Language, taking into account the language needs of each target audience;
- broadcast a significant amount of locally produced educational programming, recognising that such programmes are often best for meeting the educational needs for South Africans. However, the SABC also recognises that it is important to expand audiences' knowledge of the African continent and the rest of the world, and accordingly will ensure that internationally acquired programmes satisfy these goals;
- enhance the effectiveness of educational programmes by implementing a coherent education methodology that incorporates multimedia strategies such as the use of print, the Internet, satellite, fixed and mobile telephone networks and SMS;
- supplement educational methodologies through outreach programmes, where appropriate, in the form of training and support for users of materials aimed at deepening the educational impact of the content;
- ensure that sufficient resources are apportioned for implementing the educational mandate. To this end the SABC secures financial and other resources from a variety of sources, including the government and licence fees, private and international donors, advertising and sponsorship, co-productions and related programme partnerships with a range of national, continental and international institutions.

## **KEY PRINCIPLES**

The following guidelines enable the SABC to:

- ensure that educational broadcasting is relevant and appealing to targeted audiences and with sensitivity reflects the diverse experiences and needs of all South Africans;
- ensures that its educational programmes address imbalances in the historical provision of education, especially, but not exclusively, those based on race, gender and disability;
- The SABC links its educational broadcasting to national priorities and needs, supporting the achievement of outcomes-based education, lifelong learning, and the association of educational and life experiences;
- The SABC builds strategic partnerships that enable it to provide an effective educational broadcasting intervention.

## **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

The SABC radio stations and channels are required to comply with any legislation, regulations and licence conditions that are relevant to educational programmes. The Policy on Educational Broadcasting is also to be read together with the other relevant editorial policies including the Programming Policy, the Language Broadcasting Policy, and the Universal Service and Access Policy.

### **This Policy on Educational Broadcasting is considered when the SABC:**

- Develops strategic plans and budgets for the Corporation to meet its educational mandate;
- Produces or commissions educational programmes or multimedia content;
- Develops schedules for channels and stations;

- Procures international educational material.

Every independent producer and consultant contracted to produce educational material for the SABC should be made aware of this policy.

### **GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- The SABC ensures that its services, in combination, air a significant amount of educational programming that complies with the objectives outlined in this policy;
- At least one of the SABC's television channels screens programmes specifically in support of the primary and secondary school curricula. This is supplemented by programmes on public broadcasting radio stations;
- The SABC ensures that educational programmes are scheduled at times that are suitable for the target audiences;
- All the educational programmes have clear goals. Such goals and expected outcomes are established before the production, commissioning or acquisition of any educational programme;
- The SABC's educational broadcasting business unit, together with the commissioning editors and executive producers responsible, is tasked with ensuring that these outcomes are achieved through creative and innovative programming.

### **PROGRAMMING GUIDELINES**

- Educational programmes should conform to the highest broadcasting standards. They should utilise a wide range of programme formats designed to ensure that the aim of the programme is achieved creatively and is appropriate to the subject matter and target audience;
- Educational programmes should utilise innovative technologies and techniques (including dubbing, multilingual programming and subtitling) in order to increase the effectiveness and comprehensibility of programmes in different language communities;
- All the educational programmes should be challenging and informative, aim to promote a culture of learning and teaching, and support the drive for life-long learning. The basic tenet of all the educational programmes is to seek to impart knowledge and problem-solving skills, promote critical thinking and, when necessary, assist in changing attitudes and behaviour;
- Educational programmes should relate to the personal circumstances of the viewers and listeners, and seek to impart the knowledge and skills that would help them to change their circumstances for the better;
- Educational programming should, if appropriate, assist in fostering a harmonious relationship between South Africans and the environment, and promote sustainable development;
- Educational programmes comply with all the SABC editorial policies, including those on portrayal and stereotyping of people, violence, and the classification and scheduling of programmes. Educational programmes should seek not only to avoid stereotypes based, for example, on race, ethnicity and disability, but to challenge proactively any stereotype or bias, and so assist in changing attitudes;

- Educational programming should utilise a range of subject experts and interviewees, who, for example, are of different races, genders and physical abilities, and hold differing views, in order to reflect our diverse society.

### **ADVERTISING IN RELATION TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES**

The SABC will use every possible source of funding to meet its obligations in terms of this policy, including commercial sponsorship, subject to the following:

- When a programme is required to be presented - wholly, or in part - in a setting that simulates a place of business (for example, a supermarket), care should be taken in designing the setting, and the props used, to reduce identification with particular companies or proprietors;
- Programmes or programme material produced externally, or in created settings, may not be used to carry indirect commercial advertising;
- Care should be taken to avoid the exposure of advertising signs or other commercial identification in programme content. Where this is impossible, it is the responsibility of the producer, or the director, or both, to play down as much as possible such extraneous commercial exposure.

### **EDUCATIONAL MANDATE AREAS**

Arising from the Broadcasting Act, the following educational thematic areas have been identified:

- Early Childhood Development;
- Children at Home;
- Formal Education;
- Youth Development;
- Adult and Human Resources Development;
- Public Education.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

Programmes for early childhood development are aimed at supporting the holistic development of young children (from 0 - 7). The SABC recognises that as relatively few South African children have access to any structured early childhood education, these programmes assist in preparing young children "to be ready to learn". Educational programming also supports the implementation of the national Grade R (Reception Year) curriculum. Moreover, this programming will equip caregivers with the knowledge and skills to facilitate and support the growth and development of young children.

**Early childhood development programmes should meet the following standards:**

- Be entertaining and actively engaging the audience;
- Develop children's self-esteem;
- Enhance listeners' and viewers' imagination;
- Reflect the personal experiences and cultures of the audience;

- Affirm children's sense of self and place;
- Take account of language needs and the needs of learners with disabilities;
- Be focused primarily on health, nutrition and safety.

### **CHILDREN AT HOME**

Educational programming for children at home is aimed at children of school going age who are not at school, and seeks to create the space for children to engage and express their thoughts and opinions on issues that affect them.

**Educational programming for children at home is required to meet the following standards:**

- Be entertaining, enabling children to learn, have fun and interact with others;
- Take account of language needs and the needs of learners with disabilities;
- Promote healthy living, social awareness, self-esteem and an understanding of human rights;
- Be focused primarily on science, technology, mathematics, economics and communication.

### **FORMAL EDUCATION**

Formal educational programmes affirm and support the development of Foundation Phase learners and Intermediate Phase learners.

**Formal education programming is required to meet the following standards:**

- It should support the implementation of the national school curriculum by providing resources of excellent quality developed specifically to assist both teachers and learners to achieve national set goals and outcomes.

### **EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING**

- It should enhance learning in all the learning areas of the curriculum: literacy, numeracy and life skills (Foundation Phase), languages, mathematics, social sciences, arts and culture, life orientation, natural sciences and technology (Intermediate Phase);
- Educational programming should also take account of learners' language needs, including the language needs of people with disabilities, in this case, deaf learners.

### **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Youth development programmes are aimed at promoting a culture of life-long learning among young people, both at and after school.

**Youth programming is required to meet the following standards:**

- It should aim to develop self-esteem among listeners and viewers and provide a platform for expression;
- It should contextualise young people's realities, fears, concerns and needs;

- It should showcase youth solving problems, thinking critically, acting independently, developing creatively — intellectually, socially, cognitively and emotionally —and addressing, overcoming and transforming their future;
- It should create an awareness of the rights and responsibilities of all citizens, including the youth, as contained in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution.

### **ADULT AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**

Adult and human resources development programmes affirm the concept of life-long learning, and support development of the skills and knowledge needed for survival in a competitive and ever-evolving world. Programmes are aimed at meeting the formal and informal skills development needs of both the employed and the unemployed, and support South Africans in their occupational endeavours. Programmes include adult literacy, skills development, educator development and entrepreneurial skills development.

### **PUBLIC EDUCATION**

Public educational programmes are aimed at offering the information, knowledge and skills South Africans need for effective participation and interaction in society. They promote the drive for life-long learning, and foster tolerance and understanding of one another and all our cultures.

Such programmes enable people to take informed decisions, encourage critical thinking, and impart problem solving skills.

### **RESEARCH**

The SABC evaluates the impact of its programmes continuously. Research is done to assess audience needs and to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes. This includes audience research (e.g. to establish people's needs) and formative and summative research which enables understanding of the contribution of programming to audiences development.

### **MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The SABC executive management submits to the Board an annual action plan that identifies educational priorities for each of the educational mandate areas (outlined above). When necessary, these strategies are drafted in consultation with stakeholders. Implementation of these strategic plans is evaluated annually.

### **REVIEW**

This policy is reviewed by the SABC Board every five years.