



## LANGUAGE POLICY

<b>File Name</b>	<b>Language Policy</b>
<b>Original Author</b>	<b>Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>1 April 2019</b>

51

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1. Definitions of Concept	2
2. Legal Framework	3
3. Background and Historical Content	3
4. Goals	4
5. Capacity Building	4
6. Structures of Implementation	5
7. Mechanisms of Implementation	7
8. Mandate	7
9. Policy Review	8

51

## **DEFINITIONS**

**"designated official language by the Legislature in 1996" means an official language that enjoys special status at provincial or local government level and whose choice is based on provincial or local circumstances such as language distribution, entrenched custom and practicality.**

**"Mpumalanga Provincial Language Committee" means the committee established in terms of section 8(8) of the Pan African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act No. 59 of 1995) to advise the Pan African Language Board on any language matter affecting the Province of Mpumalanga.**

**"Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature" means the legislative authority of the Mpumalanga Government as contemplated in section 104 of the Constitution 1996.**

**"National Language Service" means a Chief Directorate within the national Department of Arts and Culture that has been responsible for, amongst other functions, with the task of formulation and implementation of the National Language Policy.**

**"Official language" means any one of the 11 official languages of the Republic of South Africa, stipulated in the Constitution 1996.**

**"Pan South African Language Board" means the Board established in terms of section 2(1) of the Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 to promote, amongst others, the development and equal use of all official South African languages, respect for multilingualism and utilisation of South Africa's language resources.**

## 1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Mpumalanga Language Policy is informed by:

- Section 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 , Chapter 1, and the following relevant provisions of the Bill of Rights:
  - Equality and language (section 9(3));
  - Language in Education (section 29(2));
  - Language and culture (section 30);
  - Cultural, religion and linguistic communities (section 31 (1));
  
- The Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act No. 59 of 1995),
- The National Language Policy Framework and Implementation Plan,
- The draft South African Languages Bill,
- The Language in Education Policy and the Norms and Standards regarding the National Policy of the National Department of Education (14 July 1997).

## 2. BACKGROUND AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 After the advent of democracy in 1994, Mpumalanga, like the rest of South Africa, was faced with the challenge of addressing the linguistic diversity which during the apartheid era was used to create a hierarchy of languages reflecting the structures of racial and class inequalities that characterised South African speech communities.
- 2.2 These practices engendered the corollary status of the indigenous languages and language varieties of the African people and other marginalised groups, including the hearing impaired enforcing negative stereotypes of the African languages. In order to address these stereotypes, DCSR has developed this provincial language policy as a strategic intervention in response to the mandate of the constitution as well as the national language policy framework.

### **3. GOALS**

The goals of the Mpumalanga Language Policy are:

- 3.1 To promote provincial and national unity;
- 3.2 To give effect to the language rights enshrined the Constitution through the active promotion of multilingualism;
- 3.3 To facilitate equitable access to government services and information, and enhance participation in government processes;
- 3.4 To support, develop and sustain multilingualism within provincial and local government departments and enhance communication and interaction with the public;
- 3.5 To promote and ensure respect and tolerance for linguistic and cultural diversity in Mpumalanga Province;
- 3.6 To contribute towards the promotion and creation of conditions for the development and use of Mpumalanga official languages;
- 3.7 To promote and ensure respect for all languages commonly used by speech communities in the Mpumalanga Province;
- 3.8 To provide guidance and direction for local government in developing their own operational language policies, to enhance multilingualism;
- 3.9 To promote good language management for cost-effective and efficient public service delivery and administration; and
- 3.10 To foster and promote nation-building initiatives, patriotism and social cohesion within Mpumalanga's diverse linguistic and cultural communities.

### **4. CAPACITY BUILDING**

- 4.1 Implementation of the language policy will increase the demand for language services such as interpreting, translation and editing in the official African languages. The increased needs for these services have implications for capacity building and improve the quality of services rendered by the fraternity of professional language practitioners. Capacity building will, therefore, be required for translation and editing, document design, interpreting, lexicography, terminography, language planning, human language technologies and linguistic theory.
- 4.2 Collaboration with the Department of Arts and Culture, Pan South African Language Board and institutions of higher learning is crucial for the acquisition development of proficiency by all public servants in language practice.
- 4.3 Language technology will be used to facilitate collaboration between language practitioners and stakeholders. Computer software such as word processing programmes, machine-assisted translation, translation memories,

spell checkers, terminology management systems and translation software should be compatible to encourage the harmonisation of terminology and other information between all language units and collaborators such as Hansards and Lexicography units.

- 4.4 The establishment of language units in each provincial government department will also impact on the scope of the activities of the Mpumalanga Provincial Language Service. The Mpumalanga Provincial Language Service will be required to coordinate the management of policy implementation by facilitating the creation of conditions for the development and use of official languages and supporting the use of South African Sign Language.
- 4.5 The areas of terminography and terminology will likewise be affected. The increase in translation work will require accelerated development of terminologies and creation of dictionaries in the official languages.

## **5. STRUCTURES OF IMPLEMENTATION**

- 5.1 Certain structures and mechanisms as discussed in the section that follows are proposed to enhance effective implementation;
  - 5.1.1 Structures will be essential in managing the use of languages,
  - 5.1.2 Coordinating language development projects,
  - 5.1.3 Professionalizing and advocating the role of language services, and
  - 5.1.4 Developing human resources and technology.
- 5.2 The Mpumalanga Provincial Language Services of the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation will facilitate the establishment of the required structures and play a coordinating role with regard to the identified mechanisms. However, successful implementation will depend largely on collaboration with all provincial and local structures, as well as PanSALB.
- 5.3 In addition to the existing infrastructures such as Pan South African Language Board, Mpumalanga Legislature and Mpumalanga Provincial Language Service, the structures that must be established to manage the implementation of the Mpumalanga Language Policy are Language Units within all provincial organs of state to drive the initiatives of language development and multilingualism and the Provincial Language Forum to promote general co-ordination, co-operation and consultation between all Provincial organs of state and non-governmental organisations on language matters.
- 5.4 The Department of Arts and Culture, Pan South African Language Board and Mpumalanga Local Government are the strategic partners of the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation in language policy development, legislation and implementation matters.
- 5.5 All activities relating to the strategic establishment of new structures and mechanisms will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Department of Arts and Culture, the leader in matters of language policy, legislation and implementation and whose mandate it is to play a coordinating and facilitating role, guiding government departments and assisted by Pan South African

Language Board in ensuring promotion of languages and protection of linguistic rights through the Pan South African Language Board structures, namely the Provincial Language Committee, the National Language Body and the National Lexicography Units.

5.6 In view of the nature of its legislative activities, the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature will provide a translation and interpreting service in the official languages of Mpumalanga. In collaboration with the strategic structures listed in 5.4, matters of language development and the promotion of multilingualism will be dealt with.

5.7 The National Language Forum was created to encourage discourse on language policy, legislation and implementation issues between language practitioners in government departments and the Department of Arts and Culture. The key strategic focus of the National Language Forum is the coordination of the activities of the various language units in government departments in the facilitation of the implementation of the National Language Policy Framework.

5.7.1 The main function of the Forum is to monitor and evaluate the implementation process, scrutinise and prioritise projects, and to drive advocacy campaigns.

5.7.2 The National Language Forum meets quarterly and its compulsory membership comprise representatives from government departments nationally, provincially and locally; Pan South African Language Board and its structures and the Department of Arts and Culture. In view of the expertise that may be needed, a representative from the Council of language practice or tertiary institution of higher learning may be invited to the Forum.

5.8 The South African Language Practitioners' Council is appointed by the Minister of Arts and Culture to raise the status of the profession of language practice and safeguard the quality of products. It will manage the training, accreditation and registration of language practitioners by setting and maintaining standards in cooperation with the National Qualifications Framework training programmes and the South African Qualifications Authority.

5.9 Membership to the South African Language Practitioner's Council is compulsory for language practitioners employed in public service.

## **6. MECHANISMS OF IMPLEMENTATION**

6.1 The vehicles through which the implementation of the Mpumalanga Provincial Language Policy will be facilitated with the collaboration of Department of Arts and Culture and Pan South African Language Board are:

6.2 Terminology development,

6.3 Translation and editing,

6.4 Lexicography,

6.5 Human Language Technologies,

51

- 6.6 A directory of language services,
- 6.7 Language audits and surveys,
- 6.8 Language awareness campaigns and the media,
- 6.9 Training in collaboration with Department of Arts and Culture,
- 6.10 Monitoring and Evaluation.

## **7. MANDATE**

- 7.1 The legislative mandate has been taken from section 6 of the Constitution, 1996 and the National Language Policy Framework of 2003.
- 7.2 Section 6 of the Constitution provides the principal legal framework for multilingualism, the development of the official languages and the promotion of respect and tolerance for South Africa's linguistic diversity. It determines the language rights of citizens, which must be honoured through provincial language policies.
- 7.3 The Mpumalanga Provincial Government recognises all the 11 official languages and in that regard will honour the mandate of government and support the creation of conditions for the development, promotion and use of the official languages.
- 7.4 In official contexts, the Mpumalanga Provincial Government may use English, SiSwati, Afrikaans and isiNdebele, taking into account practicality and expense in balancing the needs of the people of Mpumalanga.
- 7.5 Working with the Pan South African Language Board, the Mpumalanga Provincial Government will provide interpreting for Sign Language taking into account usage, practicality and expense in respect of the Constitution and the National Language Policy Framework.
- 7.6 The Mpumalanga Provincial Government will coordinate and facilitate the use of languages at local government, assisting the Mpumalanga municipalities in establishing and managing required infrastructure seek to enhance effective implementation of the language policy.
- 7.7 Mpumalanga Local government will determine the language use and preferences of their communities within an enabling provincial language policy. Upon determination of the language use and preference of communities, local government must in consultation with Department of Culture Sport and Recreation and their communities develop, publicise and implement a multilingual policy.
- 7.8 The department will assist in the translation and editing of the budget and policy statements from various Departments and assist in the outsourcing and quality assurance of documents that cannot be translated in house. Translation will be limited to the government Departments.



## 8. POLICY REVIEW

This policy takes effect from the day of approval. This policy will be subjected to review biennial from the date of its approval through consultation with all relevant stakeholders and amendment will be done when needs arises.

## 9. POLICY APPROVAL



MR GS NTOMBELA  
HEAD: CULTURE SPORT AND RECREATION

DATE: 01/04/2018

