

*Wednesday, 29 July 2020]*

No 104—2020] SECOND SESSION, SIXTH PARLIAMENT

**PARLIAMENT**

**OF THE**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS,**

**TABLINGS AND**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

WEDNESDAY, 29 JULY 2020

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### National Assembly

#### The Speaker

#### 1. Referral to Committees of papers tabled

- (1) The following papers are referred to the **Portfolio Committee on Environment, Forestry and Fisheries**:
  - (a) Government Notice No 764, published in Government Gazette No 43522, dated 13 July 2020: Proposed regulations regarding fees for the provision of Aviation Meteorological Services, in terms of the South African Weather Service Act, 2001 (Act No. 8 of 2001).
  - (b) Government Notice No 797, published in Government Gazette No 43534, dated 17 July 2020: Correction notice amending the regulations for the management of the Agulhas Front Marine Protected Area, in terms of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. of 2003).
- (2) The following papers are referred to the **Portfolio Committee on Trade, Industry and Competition**:
  - (a) List of Funded Projects and Beneficiaries of the Covid-19 Relief Programme from the National Lotteries Commission (NLC).
  - (b) List of Funded Projects and Beneficiaries from the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) for 2018-19.
  - (c) List of Funded Projects and Beneficiaries from the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) for 2017-18.

- (3) The following paper is referred to the **Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services**:
- (a) Proclamation No R. 23, published in Government Gazette No 43546, dated 23 July 2020: Referral of matters to existing Special Investigating Unit and Special Tribunal: In respect of the procurement of, or contracting for, goods, works and services, including the construction, refurbishment, leasing, occupation and use of immovable property, during, or in respect of the national state of disaster, as declared by Government Notice No. 313 of 15 March 2020, by or on behalf of the State institutions, and payments made in respect thereof, in terms of the Special Investigating Units and Special Tribunals Act, 1996 (Act No 74 of 1996).
- (4) The following papers are referred to the **Portfolio Committee on Employment and Labour** for consideration and report:
- (a) Revised Strategic Plan of the Department of Employment and Labour for 2020-21 – 2024-25.
- (b) Revised Annual Performance Plan of the Department of Employment and Labour for 2020-21.

## National Council of Provinces

### The Chairperson

#### 1. Bills passed by Assembly and transmitted to Council for concurrence

- (1) Bill passed by National Assembly and transmitted for concurrence on 29 July 2020:
- (a) **Adjustments Appropriation Bill** [B 10B - 2020] (National Assembly – sec 77).

The Bill has been referred to the **Select Committee on Appropriations** of the National Council of Provinces.

## TABLINGS

### National Assembly and National Council of Provinces

#### 1. The Speaker and the Chairperson

- (a) Submission of the Financial and Fiscal Commission on the Division of Revenue Bill for 2021-2022, tabled in terms of section 9(1) of the Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations Act, 1997 (Act No 97 of 1997), as amended [RP 177 – 2020].

#### 2. The Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries

- (a) Government Notice No 781, published in Government Gazette No 43528, dated 17 July 2020: Correction Notice Amending the Notice Declaring the Agulhas Front Marine Protected Area, in terms of Section 22A of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003).
- (b) Government Notice No 782, published in Government Gazette No 43528, dated 17 July 2020: Correction Notice Amending the Notice Declaring the Agulhas Front Marine Protected Area, in terms of Section 22A of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003).
- (c) Government Notice No 783, published in Government Gazette No 43528, dated 17 July 2020: Correction Notice Amending the Notice Declaring the Southwest Indian Seamount Marine Protected Area, in terms of section 22A of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003).
- (d) Government Notice No 784, published in Government Gazette No 43528, dated 17 July 2020: Correction Notice Amending the Regulations for the Management of the Southwest Indian Seamount Marine Protected Area. National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003).
- (e) Government Notice No 785, published in Government Gazette No 43528, dated 17 July 2020: Invitation to submit written comments or input: Consultation on the intention to amend the procedures to be followed in applying for or deciding on an environmental authorization application for large scale wind and solar photovoltaic renewable energy development activities when occurring in renewable energy development zones, in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 2008 (Act No. 107 of 1998).
- (f) Government Notice No 786, published in Government Gazette No 43528, dated 17 July 2020: Invitation to submit written comments or input: Consultation on the intention to identify Geographical Areas of Strategic Importance for the Development of Large Scale Wind and Solar Photovoltaic Energy Facilities, in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 2008 (Act No. 107 of 1998).
- (g) Government Notice No 787, published in Government Gazette No 43528, dated 17 July 2020: Invitation to submit written comments or input: Consultation on the identification of Geographical Areas of Strategic Importance for the Development of Electricity Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure and to Repeal Government Notice 113, Published under Government Gazette 41445 of 16 February 2018, in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 2008 (Act No. 107 of 1998).
- (h) Government Notice No 788, published in Government Gazette No 43528, dated 17 July 2020: Invitation to submit written comments or input: Consultation on the Intention to identify Geographical Areas Important for the Development of Strategic Gas Transmission Pipeline Infrastructure, in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 2008 (Act No. 107 of 1998).

### **3. The Minister of Justice and Correctional Services**

- (a) Revised Strategic Plan of the Department of Correctional Services for 2020 – 2025.

### **4. The Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture**

- (a) Addendum to the Annual Performance Plan of Ditsong Museums in South Africa for 2020/21.

## **National Assembly**

### **1. The Speaker**

- (a) Reply by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation to *Report of the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation on Budget Vote 6: International Relations and Cooperation*, as adopted by the Assembly on 9 June 2020.

Referred to the **Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation**.

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## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **National Council of Provinces**

**1. Report of the Select Committee on Security and Justice, on South Africa's Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in South East Asia, dated 29 July 2020**

The Select Committee on Security and Justice, having considered the request for approval by Parliament of South Africa's Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in South East Asia, referred to it, recommends that the House, in terms of section 231(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, approves the said Treaty.

Report to be considered.

## **2. Report of the Select Committee on Security and Justice on the Judicial Matters Amendment Bill [B 13B – 2019] (National Assembly – sec 75), dated 29 July 2020**

The Select Committee on Security and Justice, having deliberated on and considered the subject of the **Judicial Matters Amendment Bill [B 13B – 2019] (National Assembly – sec 75)**, referred to it on 18 March 2020, reports that it has agreed to the Bill and reports as follows:

### **1. Background**

The **Judicial Matters Amendment Bill** seeks to:

- Amend the Divorce Act, 1979 (Act No. 70 of 1979) and the National Prosecuting Act, 1998 (Act No. 32 of 1998) with the intention to address practical and technical issues.
- Clause 1 of the Bill amends section 7 of the Divorce Act, 1979 (Act No. 70 of 1979) to remedy where the court declared section 7(3) of the Divorce Act, 1979, constitutionally invalid.
- Clause 2 of the Bill amends section 12 of the National Prosecuting Act, 1998 (Act No. 32 of 1998), which deals with the term of office of the National Director of Public Prosecutions and Deputy National Directors of Public Prosecutions.

The Bill is tagged as a Bill to be dealt with in terms of Section 75 of the Constitution (a Bill not affecting provinces).

- The Department reported that there would not be significant financial implications associated with the Bill to the State.
- The Bill was referred to the Select Committee on Security and Justice on 18 March 2020.

### **2. Public participation process on the Judicial Matters Amendment Bill [B 13B – 2019] (National Assembly – sec 75)**

The Select Committee on Security and Justice invited stakeholders and interested persons to make written submissions on the Judicial Matters Amendment Bill [B13B-2019] by the 3 July 2020. The Bill was advertised in print media on 17 June 2020, on electronic platforms on 8 June 2020 and on various radio stations from 28 June to 2 July 2020.

### **3. Summary of Submissions (See Annexure A):**

The Committee received ten written submissions and the Department responded to all of the submissions received (see Annexure A).

The Africa Criminal Justice Reform (ACJR) was the only stakeholder who proposed an amendment. The ACJR proposed that the 12-month suspension contained in Clause 2 of the Bill should remain 6 months as determined by the Constitutional Court.

### **4. Committee consideration of the Judicial Matters Amendment Bill [B 13B – 2019] (National Assembly – sec 75)**

The Select Committee received a briefing on the Bill on 29 May 2020 and thereafter advertised the Bill for written comment. On 15 July 2020, the Select Committee received a further briefing from the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development on the written submissions.

In respect of the ACJR submission regarding the 6-month suspension, the Department noted that it had considered the 6-month suspension and the commencement of the disciplinary process. However, the Department informed the Committee, that setting up a disciplinary process was a lengthy procedure and 6 months would be insufficient time to conclude the process, hence the 12-month suspension is included in the Bill.

Members were satisfied with the Department's response to the written submissions and agreed to the adoption of the Bill without any amendments.



## **5. Recommendation**

The Select Committee on Security and Justice, having considered the **Judicial Matters Amendment Bill [B 13B – 2019] (National Assembly – sec 75)**, referred to it on 18 March 2020 and classified by the JTM as a section 75 Bill, recommends the Council pass the Bill.

### **Report to be considered**

**Annexure A****DEPARTMENT SUMMARY OF WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS AND  
RESPONSES: JUDICIAL MATTERS AMENDMENT BILL [B13B -  
2019]****Introduction**

The Select Committee on Justice and Correctional Services invited stakeholders and interested persons to make written submissions on the Judicial Matters Amendment Bill [B 13 - 2019]. Ten written submissions have been received.

Table provides a clause by clause summary of the submissions and general comments.

**List of commentators:**

1. Africa Criminal Justice Reform (ACJR)
2. COSATU
3. Dr R Naidoo
4. Commission for Gender Equality (CGE)
5. Father's Rights Movement
6. K Buthelezi
7. MN Sodumo
8. MK Aphane
9. H Terezakis
10. R Mazibe

## TABLE OF SUBMISSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS BY CLAUSE

Clause/ theme	Name	Submission / Recommendation	DOJCD Response
Clause 1	COSAT U	The proposed amendment is welcomed and supported as it is aimed at protecting the rights of women married out of community property under the Transkei Marriage Act and any other similar former homeland legislation.	Noted.
Clause 1	Dr R Naidoo	<p>A question is raised whether-</p> <p>(a) reference to “any law applicable in a former homeland” applies to customary law,</p> <p>(b) this is a complementary Act to the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act in respect of marriages that took place prior to the commencement of the Constitution of the RSA 1996, and</p> <p>(c) whether Schedule 6, Items 2 and 3(1)(a) of the Constitution is read into this amendment.</p>	<p>(a) The phrase refers to any law the effect of which is to exclude the benefits accruing to a spouse under section 7 of the Divorce Act(Act 70 of 1979);</p> <p>(b) Yes, it can be argued that this Bill complements the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act in so far as proprietary consequences in a customary marriage are concerned in that there must be a just and equitable redistribution of assets between the parties in the event of divorce, and</p> <p>(c) Schedule 6, Items 2 was put in a Statute Book to address the administrative continuation of existing laws at the time, subject to their amendment or repeal. This Schedule is not read into the Divorce Act because it does not have relevance on the issue.</p>

Clause/ theme	Name	Submission / Recommendation	DOJCD Response
Clause 1	CGE	The amendment is welcomed since it brings the Act in line with the decision of the Constitutional Court in the Holomisa case, and also ensures that women married out of community of property under the Transkei Marriage Act are able to enjoy equal protection and benefit of the law through just and equitable redistribution of property on divorce.	Noted.
Clause 2	Africa Criminal Justice Reform (ACJR)	<p>(a) This amendment deviates from the order of the Constitutional Court which states that the period of suspension of a National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP) or a Deputy National Director of Public Prosecutions (Deputy National Director) by the President may not exceed a period of six months. The position of NDPP or DPP is one of the most important positions in any country. It is of utmost importance that all processes (appointment and disciplinary) involving such incumbents should be facilitated and processed as soon as possible to ensure that the office of the NDPP or DPP is not compromised.</p> <p>(b) The authority of the President in terms of the Constitution and the</p>	<p>(a) The amendment does not necessarily mean that the period of suspension of an NDPP or a Deputy National Director must be 12 months, the period may be shorter than 12 months, especially in relation to investigations that are not complex. The twelve month period is proposed for pragmatic purposes.</p> <p>In <b>Helen Suzman Foundation v President of the Republic of South Africa and Others 2015 (2) SA 1 (CC) (27 November 2014)</b>, which involved the suspension of the National Head of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, the Constitutional Court held that the employer has a duty to “expedite the inquiry to avoid lengthy suspensions on pay”. This principle also finds application in the suspension of an NDPP or a Deputy National Director.</p> <p>(b) Noted. A change of this nature will require revision of policy, whereby different policy</p>

Clause/ theme	Name	Submission / Recommendation	DOJCD Response
		<p>National Prosecuting Authority Act, 1998 (Act 31 of 1998)(the NPA Act) to appoint the NDPP and the Deputy National Directors poses significant risks for the NPA's independence as the President and the Minister of Justice may appoint the entire top echelon of the NPA without any input from other key stakeholders, such as Parliament, professional bodies or the public in general. The appointment of the NDPP should not be the sole prerogative of the President and the appointment process should be transparent. There are no provisions guiding the President on the interpretation of a fit and proper incumbent. The NPA is therefore not completely sheltered from political interference because of inadequate legislative measures in the appointment of the NDPP.</p> <p>(c) The provisions of the NPA Act that grant the President the power to remove the NDPP for misconduct, on account of ill health or incapacity to carry out his or her duties, and on account that he or she is no longer a fit and proper person, pending a resolution passed by Parliament to endorse or dismiss the decision of the President creates the risk that the</p>	<p>options will need to be considered and debated as part of policy discourse. It is not appropriate to consider amendments of this nature at this point due to the urgency to finalise the Bill. The Bill aims to give effect to a decision of the Constitutional Court, which should be enacted as soon as possible. Adding other amendments to the Bill will require extensive consultation with stakeholders and the public, which will delay the Bill even further.</p> <p>(c) <i>Noted.</i> See response in (b) above.</p>

Clause/ theme	Name	Submission / Recommendation	DOJCD Response
		<p>President, with the concurrence of a Parliament dominated by the ruling party, will seek to remove an NDPP who is not willing to co-operate with the President's demands.</p> <p>(d) The provisions in the Constitution and the NPA Act that state that the Minister of Justice must exercise final responsibility over the prosecuting authority and that the NDPP must determine prosecution policy with the concurrence of the Minister of Justice which could imply a great deal of ministerial control of the prosecuting authority and a restriction of its independence.</p> <p>(e) (i) The NPA's accountability to and Parliament's role should be limited to reviewing performance and influencing policy and policy directives.</p> <p>(ii) The NPA should not be accountable to Parliament in relation to its decisions in individual cases.</p> <p>(f) The Committee should initiate a comprehensive programme of the reform of the NPA that would look at all aspects of the legal frameworks, policies, and operations with a view to</p>	<p>(d) See response in (b) above.</p> <p>(e) (i) Noted. See response in (b) above.</p> <p>(ii) Noted.</p> <p>(f) Noted. This matter is however not within the ambit of the Bill, but will receive consideration in due course.</p>

Clause/ theme	Name	Submission / Recommendation	DOJCD Response
		rebuild public trust in the institution.	
	COSAT U	COSATU proposes that a clause formalising the process that was followed in the appointment of the current NPDD which entails a call for applications, the appointment of a Judicial Services Commission type panel of non-partisan experts to interview the candidates, the hosting of such interviews in an open and transparent manner should be inserted in the Bill.	A change of this nature will require revision of policy, whereby different policy options may need to be considered. It is not appropriate to consider amendments of this nature at this point because of the urgency of the Bill. The Bill aims to give effect to a decision of the Constitutional Court, which should be enacted as soon as possible. Adding other amendments to the Bill will require extensive consultation with stakeholders and the public, which will delay the Bill even further.
	Dr R Naidoo	<p>(a) The order that was made by the Constitutional Court and suspended for 18 months is now in force and Parliament has missed the deadline. Against this background, a question is raised why the Bill is still proposing a longer suspension period of twelve months.</p> <p>(b) The amendment in clause 2 (c) is in line with the Constitutional Court's judgment, however, a concern is raised that the NDPP or a DPP would still be entitled to receive a full salary even in circumstances where it is clear that they have committed an unlawful act. While disciplinary processes need to be followed, there must also be a provision that</p>	<p>(a) If the comment relates to the period of suspension proposed in the Bill, then the comment is similar to that made by the ACJR above, and the response above applies here as well. Also, the period of twelve months relates to the suspension period of an incumbent and not in any way tied to the coming into operation of the Bill.</p> <p>(b) Security of tenure is one of the key methods to protect the independence of an office, including that of the NDPP and DPP, in order to ensure stability. It is a labour law usage that a person who may interfere with an investigation is suspended when investigations are carried out. It is not possible to summarily dismiss a person in these circumstances as due process must be followed.</p>

Clause/ theme	Name	Submission / Recommendation	DOJCD Response
		senior officials should be dismissed immediately for very serious misconduct. Alternatively, there must be an additional subsection clarifying circumstances when there should be no pay.	

### GENERAL

Clause 1	Name	Submission/Recommendation	DOJCD Response
	Father's Rights Movement	Lawyers advertising themselves as "Family Law Experts" are using divorcing parties to enrich themselves. The traditional adversarial approaches used by the court for civil litigation does not work for family law.	Although this submission does not fall within the scope of the Bill, the adversarial system is part of South African law used to determine the burden of proof.
	K Buthelezi	The Divorce Act should be repealed and removed from the Statute Book in order to eliminate challenges of the division of assets and custody of children.	It is not possible to force parties to stay married to one another against their will, this can have devastating consequences such as aggravating violence. Those exercising their right to divorce should be provided with a mechanism of sharing



			their assets in that event.
	MN Sodumo	Parliament should review the laws relating to the division of the assets in the event of divorce because women and children are left disadvantaged by the equal sharing of the assets when the husband had not contributed much to the acquiring such assets.	Noted. The parties to a marriage have a right to choose their marital regime, whether in community of property or out of community of property with an antenuptial contract in order to protect their assets.
	MK Aphane	The commentator proposes that there be legislation that regulates cheating in a marriage.	Although this comment does not fall within the scope of the Bill, introducing such law will amount to regulating people's private lives. Also this is a difficult topic since some customary law cultures permit a person to have more than one spouse, so it will be difficult to determine when a relationship is identified as cheating.
	H Terezakis	1. The law should not sanction or promote a mentally ill person who is acting on delusion to take actions that could harm them and their loved ones. The following questions are raised:	1. Mental illness does not take away a person's rights constitutional rights, including the right to equality and, freedom dignity.

		<p>(a) whether a mentally ill plaintiff is competent to proceed with a divorce action;</p>	<p>(a) Yes, they can. In Pienaar v Pienaar's Curator 1930 OPD 171 (at 174–175) the court held that a person who has been declared mentally ill is capable of performing legal acts to the extent which he or she may de facto mentally be capable of doing so. In order to ascertain whether a plaintiff has the mental capacity to institute matrimonial action on his or her own behalf, it would thus not be enough to simply state that he or she was incapable to do so because the court had declared him to be of unsound mind. A plaintiff might have had the mental capacity to assess the state of his own marriage and make a decision in accordance with his or her assessment at a particular moment, despite being declared</p>
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		<p>(b) does the law recognise incompetence to maintain a divorce action as a distinct form of legal incapacity;</p> <p>(c) is there consistency in our law requiring parties to be competent to institute and maintain a divorce action;</p> <p>(d) is there a standard for incompetence to divorce and what would authorise courts to adjudicate this issue; and</p>	<p>of an unsound mind. Furthermore, depending on the extent of the person's mental capacity, a curator could be appointed to assist a person with the management of his or her affairs.</p> <p>(b) Yes, it is possible for a litigant who had the capacity to act when he or she instituted legal proceedings to lack the capacity to continue with the proceedings at a later stage.</p> <p>(c) Yes, there is consistency with regards to capacity to institute legal proceedings.</p> <p>(d) The courts are guided by expert evidence/medical reports. The court can also, on application, order the appointment of a curator ad litem to litigate on behalf of such a person.</p>
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		<p>(e) how would a court discern whether a psychiatric disorder renders as compromised, a plaintiff's competence to divorce, considering today's 'no fault' divorces.</p> <p>2. South African law has a gap in that it fails to provide for parental alienation. He referred the Committee to Brazilian legislation in this regard.</p>	<p>(e) The courts are guided by expert evidence/medical reports.</p> <p>2. Parental alienation occurs when a parent is deprived from exercising his or her parental rights and responsibilities. Such a parent could approach a court for relief.</p> <p>The high Court is the upper guardian of minors and is empowered and obliged to enquire into all matters concerning the interests of minor children. It may make orders for custody and guardianship and does so on regular basis.</p>
	R Mazibe	<p>1. (a) A question is raised on what can be done to improve our criminal justice.</p> <p>(b) What needs to be done to promote and protect the safety of persons of different sexual orientation?</p>	<p>(a) The law improves through constant review and participation by all stakeholders in the process of making the law.</p> <p>(b) The law affords protection to</p>

			<p>everyone, including persons of different sexual orientation. Increased public education can also contribute to awareness raising on constitutional rights.</p>
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### **3. REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ENTERPRISES AND COMMUNICATION ON ITS DELIBERATIONS ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET VOTE 30: COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES, DATED 29 JULY 2020**

The Select Committee on Public Enterprises and Communication (the Committee), having considered the supplementary budget on Budget Vote 30: Communications and Digital Technologies on July 22, 2020, reports as follows:

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

The Public Finance Management Act, 1999 read together with the Money Bills Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Act, 2009 empowers the Minister of Finance to table an adjustments budget, when necessary. The tabling of the 2020 supplementary Budget was necessitated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn in the country. On June 24, 2020, the Minister of Finance, Mr Tito Mboweni, tabled the 2020 supplementary Budget.

#### **2. INTRODUCTION**

The COVID-19 is defined as an illness caused by the novel coronavirus that causes severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It was initially reported to the World Health Organisation (WHO) on December 31, 2019. On January 30, 2020, the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global health emergency and on March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic required global action by all nation states to draft and implement a variety of mitigation strategies to reduce exposure to and impact of COVID-19. The response by individual countries to the pandemic was critical in mitigating the impact of the national epidemics. In South Africa, this included stringent lockdowns, travel restrictions and the closure of schools and non-essential businesses.

By March 15, 2020 COVID-19 cases remained relatively low (61 confirmed cases; 0 deaths). However, President Cyril Ramaphosa stated that ‘urgent and drastic’ measures were required

to mitigate the spread of the virus and address the emergency of the situation. The President declared a State of Disaster on March 15, 2020, which gave the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma powers, in accordance with the National Disaster Management Act, 2002, to limit certain rights and freedoms for South African citizens.

From March 18, 2020, a series of regulations, specific to respective sectors, was promulgated, which restricted, among other things the movement of persons and goods, as well as the prohibition of foreign nationals from high-risk countries (WHO definition) entering South Africa.<sup>1</sup>

To minimise the economic impact of COVID-19, South Africa on April 21, 2020, introduced a national relief fund in the form of a R500 billion fiscal support package. This included spending on priorities in the containment of the COVID-19 virus and to offset the economic impact of the pandemic.

On April 30, 2020 National Treasury published the “Economic Measures for COVID-19”, outlining a R500 billion response, as well as identifying the funding sources for the package. Part of the funding sources for this package is a R130 billion that will come from government department across the country. The R100 billion will come from national departments while R30 billion will come from provincial departments.

Section 16 of the PFMA: Use of funds in emergency situations - the Minister of Finance may approve the use of unappropriated funds if it is for spending of an exceptional nature. This happens if postponing the spending to a future parliamentary appropriation would seriously prejudice the public interest.

The special adjustment budget provides for changes in the main appropriation owing to the categories of expenditure specified in Section 30(2) of the PFMA, by programme and economic classification. All other adjustments not included in this special adjustment budget will be tabled in the October Adjustment Budget.

The Minister of Finance subsequently tabled the 2020 Supplementary Budget on June 24, 2020 along with the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill [B 9 – 2020] and the 2020 Adjustments Appropriation Bill [B 10 – 2020]. All other adjustments not included in this adjustments

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<sup>1</sup> The Social and Economic Impact of COVID-19 on South Africa, sourced at: <https://www.silkroadbriefing.com/news/2020/04/16/social-economic-impact-COVID-19-south-africa/> - 9/07/2020

budget will be implemented in the October 2020 adjustments budget, with the details outlined in the *Adjusted Estimates of National Expenditure*.

The Supplementary Budget sets out the initial economic and fiscal response from Government to the COVID-19 pandemic. It fast-tracks processes to provide resources to frontline services, provincial and local government, as well as businesses and households, with a specific focus on the most vulnerable South Africans. Furthermore, the Supplementary Budget sets out a roadmap to stabilise debt, improve spending patterns, and creates a foundation for economic recovery.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ON THE DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

In line with National Treasury guidelines, departments were mandated to assess and prioritise their allocated budgets to contribute to the R500 billion fiscal support package, as well as addressing challenges in dealing with COVID-19. The Department of Communications and Digital Technologies submitted to National Treasury a proposal on where appropriated monies could be shifted or suspended. Having reviewed the proposal, National Treasury thereafter submitted feedback and proposed the following:

The Department received a main appropriation of R3.4 billion in February 2020/21 which had been earmarked for various projects, such as the SA-Connect Project, which had been allocated R184 million. R522 million had been allocated for the new model of the Broadcasting Digital Migration (BDM) project. The USAASA costs on the distribution of Set-top boxes by the South African Post Office (SAPO) amounted to R178 million for the 2020/21 financial year, see graph below.

Some <b>earmarked funds</b> includes:	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
SA Connect Phase 1: Broadband Connectivity	184 379	194 520	203 857
USAF: New model for BDM	522 000	1 103 522	-
USAASA: Distribution costs for SAPO for BDM	178 000	97 000	-

A total 15 percent of R522 million amounting to R78,3 million was reduced from the BDM budget allocation - the R78 million is from the voucher system by USAASA.

National Treasury granted provisional approval for surplus funds from interest earned amounting to R242 million to be retained by USAF for the 2019/20 financial year.



These funds will be used to assist indigent Grade 12 learners affected by the lockdown due to the COVID-19 virus.

An allocation letter was received from National Treasury confirming the budget cuts of R111 million in line with the Adjustments Appropriation Bill, 2020, which was tabled in Parliament on 24 June 2020.

### 3.1 Budget Adjustments per Programme

The impacted Programmes of the department in terms of this downward allocation include (i) Administration for -R13.447 Million; (ii) ICT Policy Development and Research for -R5.487 million; (iii) ICT Infrastructure Development and Support for -R81.833 million; and (iv) ICT Information Society and Capacity for -R10.664 million. This totals R111.431 million in proposed total net change.

The overall budget cut amounted to R111 million, which had been confirmed by the adjustment appropriation bill.

Programmes	Voted (Main appropriation)	Savings Declared	Adjusted appropriation
Administration	313 667	13 447	300 220
ICT International Relations and Affairs	60 835	-	60 835
ICT Policy Development and Research	69 792	5 487	64 305
ICT Enterprise and Public Entity Oversight	1 750 178	-	1 750 178
ICT Infrastructure Development and Support	1 127 517	3 533	1 123 984
ICT Information Society and Capacity Developm	72 548	10 664	61 884
<b>Total for Programmes</b>	<b>3 394 537</b>	<b>33 131</b>	<b>3 361 406</b>

**Programme 2:** Savings achieved on goods and services amounted to R33 million and had been mainly derived from the travel and subsistence budget, advertising, consultants and training and development venues. These line items had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the funds allocated could not be spent.

There was no budget cut for Programme 2, as it had been negatively affected by the unfavourable exchange rate during the payment of the international membership fees, and savings declared from this programme had been shifted to the line item to cover the gap and defray excess costs in the programme.

**Programme 4:** The programme was mainly driven by transfers to the entities and the budget for goods and services (for this programme) was very small. Following discussions with

National Treasury, only R522 million had been earmarked for the BDM project, and 15 percent (R78.3 million) was cut.

The Department had since requested National Treasury to utilise the R242 million in interest that it would retain for the 2019/2020 financial year for the TV project to assist indigent grade 12 learners affected by COVID-19.

Budget cuts have necessitated that funds be redirected to provide for personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitisers, sick bays, decontamination of premises, the provision of data, and tools of trade for all employees to work remotely.

These budget cuts have affected annual performance plan (APP) targets that were presented to the Committee, and the APP will be reviewed in line with the revised budget. The revised APP will ultimately be presented to the Minister and presented in Parliament and to the Committee.

### 3.2 Key revised allocations by economic classification

In terms of Economic Classification, the suspension of funds occurred from Goods and Services under Current Payments as well as in Departmental agencies and accounts under Transfers and Subsidies, see table below.

<b>Economic Classification</b>	<b>Voted (Main appropriation)</b>	<b>Savings Declared</b>	<b>Adjusted appropriation</b>
Compensation of employees	348 272	-	348 272
Goods and services	431 712	33 131	398 581
Transfers and subsidies	2 582 803	-	2 582 803
Machinery and equipment	16 945	-	16 945
Software and other intangible assets	14 805	-	14 805
<b>Total for Economic Classification</b>	<b>3 394 537</b>	<b>33 131</b>	<b>3 361 406</b>

There was a downward revision of a total of R33.131 million as a result of reduction in non-essential goods and services such as travel and subsistence, and venues and facilities. Budget cuts mainly effected subsistence & travel, advertising, consultants, training & development, venues and facilities and other items, see table below.

As mentioned previously, a further downward revision to a total of R78.300 million was as a result of reduction in the number of budgeted vouchers disbursed to households for the Broadcasting Digital Migration Programme. Hence the total downward revision in the allocation of the budget vote is R111.431 million.

## 4. IMPLICATIONS OF SHIFTED FUNDS ON PROGRAMMES OR PROJECTS

### 4.1 Reprioritised funds from Programme 4

National Treasury had approved R242 million for USAASA to provide Integrated Digital Television Sets (IDTVs) to matriculants from indigent households. This programme was a part of BDM Phase 2. More than 150 000 households would receive IDTV, which would offset the reduction through the reallocation of the budget.

A tender for the procurement of IDTVs has been issued by USAASA and the closing date was 2 July 2020. The evaluation process will take place over one to three weeks, depending on the level of complexity. USAASA has engaged at a local and national level, with the aim to assist matric pupils and ensure that IDTVs were distributed to the correct households. Below are a few issues for noting relating to the IDTV evaluation process:

- (i) The voucher value is yet to be determined.
- (ii) USAASA will assess the market value of the IDTV through the procurement bid evaluation process and provide an accurate voucher value of the IDTV.
- (iii) The voucher can be used by the qualifying household either to acquire an IDTV with related antennas or Set-Top-Box as per the Cabinet Revised BDM Model, December 2019.
- (iv) The DTT reception devices refers to either an IDTV or Set-Top-Box that comes with related antennas depending on the area of coverage whether is DTT or DTH.

With the renewed BDM programme approach, Phase 1 involved the depletion of the stock that was currently at the Post Office, and it is being ensured that there is stakeholder involvement and participation across all provinces. The registration and localisation framework is also taking place during Phase 1.

Phase 2 involves the voucher system which will impact on the affordability of the migration devices such as decoders and Integrated Digital Television (IDTV) sets. USAASA is committed to ensuring that the BDM programme is implemented.

The shortfall of 43 595 will be compensated through the subsidy rollout of IDTVs for the 2020 Grade 12 learners' indigent households.

The number of the IDTV sets for 2020 Grade 12 learners to be procured will be increased through shrewd price negotiations process within the budgeted amount of R242 000 000.

The Agency is collaborating with DTT PMO Office and Sentech and other stakeholders will need to investigate other cheaper alternative means to ensure a seamless migration of views within the budgeted amount.

## **5. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Select Committee on Public Enterprises and Communications, in interrogating the presentation by the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, observed and made recommendations to the Minister comprising the following:

### **5.1 Observations**

The Committee noted:

- (i) with concern that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department had a downward revision of its budget to R111 million;
- (ii) with great concern that there still are no clear timelines on the delivery of the BDM programme and that the information provided to the Committee is contradictory;
  - a. that the DTT programme deadline remains December 2021;
  - b. however, that Phase 2 of the programme would only be completed in the 2021/2022 financial years.
  - c. That set-top boxes were stored and this compromised their value as they were not distributed to beneficiaries
  - d. With concern that there was a lack of capacity in the implementation of the Digital Migration project
- (iii) Where installers of set-top boxes are not locals this creates problems when signals are lost and no installers around to fix the problem.
- (iv) With concern that DStv prices were not cut down during lock down despite the repeats on their programmes and live shows.
- (v) with appreciation the introduction of IDTV's to qualifying indigent households with matriculants;
  - a. with caution that learners are more prone to require data and laptops in line with the Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies;
  - b. and accepted Minister's response that the IDTVs were issued in line with the DTT process and were specific to indigent households that were already identified to

- receive government subsidy and is a response to households who have matriculants impacted negatively by the National State of Disaster; and
- c. that the tender process for IDTVs is at evaluation stage;
  - d. the need for a time-frame for spectrum release
- (vi) that STBs are available to be purchased by unsubsidized people at all retail stores;
  - (vii) with concern that the COVID-19 pandemic may negatively impact on:
    - a. the distribution of STBs;
    - b. indigent HH; and
    - c. overall DTT rollout;
  - (viii) with concern that the rapid deployment infrastructure project was intrusive and owners should charge a fee for servitudes
  - (ix) that the standards for STBs has been altered (by ICASA) to allow manufacturers to manufacture cheaper STBs;
  - (x) that an agreement with Sentech is underway and close to finality;
- On other pressing matters relating to the SABC, the Committee noted that
- (i) that the Deputy Minister is engaging the SABC unions and will inform the Committee once the process is concluded;

## 5.2 Recommendations

The Committee recommends that the Minister should ensure that the Department:

- (i) provide clear timelines for the delivery of all phases of the BDM Programme;
  - a. provide clear timelines for the switch to digital signal;
  - b. implement clear timeframes for distribution of STBs;
  - c. accelerate the process of distribution of STBs in order to ensure a quicker migration process; and
  - d. ensures that installation of STBs is effective and speedily implemented;
  - e. Installation of set-top-boxes should be done by locals and not by people from
  - f. ensure that proper governance and implementation processes of the digital migration are in place ahead of Johannesburg or Gauteng.
  - g. Provides a time-frame for the release of the spectrum
- (ii) closely monitor timelines towards the switch-off date of December 2021;
- (iii) continue to strengthen connectivity of all rural areas of South Africa;
  - a. provide citizens with improved access to broadband connectivity;

- (iv) ensure the use of vouchers for the purpose it is intended for;
- (v) take necessary precautions to ensure that procurement processes and tenders are compliant with legislation, policy and regulations of government;
- (vi) develop a stakeholder engagement plan and marketing strategy for the unsubsidized DTT market;
- (vii) ensure that recipients of IDTVs pay their own television licences;
- (viii) ensure that the database of indigent households is updated and reconciled in order to ensure that the correct households receive IDTVs; and
- (ix) encourage the payment of TV licences by all South African citizens in general so that the SABC can derive revenue to be financially stable to continue local content production.

[The Economic Freedom Fighters objected to the Report.]

Report to be considered.

#### **4. REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ENTERPRISES AND COMMUNICATION ON ITS DELIBERATIONS ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ON BUDGET VOTE 4: GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM, DATED 29 JULY 2020**

The Select Committee on Public Enterprises and Communication (the Committee), having considered the supplementary budget on Budget Vote 4: Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), reports as follows:

##### **1. BACKGROUND**

The Public Finance Management Act, 1999 read together with the Money Bills Amendment Procedure and Related Matters Act, 2009 empowers the Minister of Finance to table an adjustments budget, when necessary. The tabling of the 2020 supplementary Budget was necessitated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn in the country. On June 24, 2020, the Minister of Finance, Mr Tito Mboweni, tabled the 2020 supplementary Budget.

##### **2. INTRODUCTION**

The COVID-19 is defined as an illness caused by a novel coronavirus that causes severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It was initially reported to the World Health Organisation (WHO) on December 31, 2019. On January 30, 2020, the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global health emergency. On March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, its first such designation since declaring H1N1 influenza a pandemic in 2009.

The COVID-19 pandemic required global action by all nation states to draft and implement a variety of mitigation strategies to reduce exposure to and impact of COVID-19. The responses by individual countries to the pandemic was critical in influencing the trajectory of national epidemics. This has included stringent lockdowns, travel restrictions and the closure of schools and non-essential businesses.

In South Africa, the number of cases as of March 15, 2020 remained relatively low (61 confirmed cases; 0 deaths). However, President Cyril Ramaphosa stated that ‘urgent and

drastic' measures were required to mitigate the spread of the virus and address the emergency of the situation. The President declared a State of Disaster on March 15, 2020, which gave the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma powers, in accordance with the National Disaster Management Act, 2002 to limit certain rights and freedoms for South African citizens.

From March 18, 2020, a series of regulations, specific to respective sectors, was promulgated, which restricted, among other things the movement of persons and goods, as well as the prohibition of foreign nationals from high-risk countries (WHO definition) entering South Africa. as well as a hard lockdown, which prohibited the movement of citizens.<sup>1</sup>

To minimise the economic impact of COVID-19, South Africa on April 21, 2020, introduced a national relief fund in the form of a R500 billion fiscal support package. This included spending on priorities in the containment of the COVID-19 virus and to offset the economic impact of the pandemic.

On April 30, 2020 National Treasury published the "Economic Measures for COVID-19", outlining a R500 billion response, as well as identifying the funding sources for the package. Part of the funding sources for this package is a R130 billion that will come from government department across the country. The R100 billion will come from national departments while R30 billion will come from provincial departments.

Section 16 of the PFMA: Use of funds in emergency situations - the Minister of Finance may approve the use of unappropriated funds if it is for spending of an exceptional nature. This happens if postponing the spending to a future parliamentary appropriation would seriously prejudice the public interest.

The special adjustment budget provides for changes in the main appropriation owing to the categories of expenditure specified in Section 30(2) of the PFMA, by programme and economic classification.

All other adjustments not included in this special adjustment budget will be tabled in the October Adjustment Budget.

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<sup>1</sup> The Social and Economic Impact of COVID-19 on South Africa, sourced at: <https://www.silkroadbriefing.com/news/2020/04/16/social-economic-impact-COVID-19-south-africa/> - 9/07/2020



The Minister of Finance subsequently tabled the 2020 Supplementary Budget on June 24, 2020 along with the Division of Revenue Amendment Bill [B 9 – 2020] and the 2020 Adjustments Appropriation Bill [B 10 – 2020]. All other adjustments not included in this adjustments budget will be implemented in the October 2020 adjustments budget, with the details outlined in the *Adjusted Estimates of National Expenditure*.

The Supplementary Budget sets out the initial economic and fiscal response from Government to the COVID-19 pandemic. It fast-tracks processes to provide resources to frontline services, provincial and local government, as well as businesses and households, with a specific focus on the most vulnerable South Africans. Furthermore, the Supplementary Budget sets out a roadmap to stabilise debt, improve spending patterns, and creates a foundation for economic recovery.

### **3. OVERVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ON THE DEPARTMENT: GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

In line with National Treasury guidelines, departments were mandated to assess and prioritise their allocated budgets to contribute to the R500 billion fiscal support package, as well as addressing challenges in dealing with COVID-19. The GCIS submitted to National Treasury a proposal on where appropriated monies could be shifted or suspended. Having reviewed the proposal, National Treasury thereafter submitted feedback and proposed the following:

The Department received a main appropriation of R720,5 million in February 2020/21 which had been earmarked for various projects.

When the President declared the State of Disaster in March 2020 as it related to the COVID-19; GCIS was directed to (i) co-ordinate the messaging to the public. Key to the directive was to co-ordinate messaging across all spheres of government; and (ii) to drive the paid for advertising to educate and raise the awareness on COVID-19. A costed budget was submitted to National Treasury for the purpose.

Key deliverables on the basis of the costed budget include:

- (i) Educate society about COVID 19;
- (ii) Provide information on prevention on the spread of the disease;
- (iii) Dispel the myths occasioned by continuous disinformation; and

- (iv) Create general awareness message on the new normal as we continue to live with the virus.

A summary of the adjustment budget of COVID-19 Campaign equals a total of R60 million that was allocated through Special Adjustment Budget:

Media Space (Electronic and Print):	R50 100 000
Print Products and Distributions:	R 3 900 000
Advertising Agencies:	R 6 000 000
<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>R60 000 000</b>

There has been a proposed upward revision of the budget to R752 million for the financial year in question. A total of R30 million is allocated to COVID-19 purposes. There is also a virement<sup>2</sup> of funds to the tune of R39 million (see table below):

R thousand	2020/21 Main budget	Downward revisions			Reallocations			2020/21 Total net change proposed	2020/21 Total allocation proposed
		Suspension of funds (COVID-19 purposes)	Virements from (COVID-19 purposes)	Virements from (other)	Allocated to (COVID-19 purposes)	Virements to (COVID-19 purposes)	Virements to (other)		
<b>Programmes</b>									
Administration	171 557	–	–	-929	–	–	9 251	8 322	179 879
Content Processing and Dissemination	415 404	–	–	-37 000	26 100	–	30 000	19 100	434 504
Intergovernmental Coordination and Stakeholder Management	133 587	–	–	-1 322	3 900	–	–	2 578	136 165
<b>Total</b>	<b>720 548</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>-39 251</b>	<b>30 000</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>39 251</b>	<b>30 000</b>	<b>750 548</b>

As illustrated in the table above, a total of R26.1 million was allocated to COVID-19 purposes in the Content Processing and Dissemination Programme of the Department, while only R3.9 million was allocated for COVID-19 purposes in the Intergovernmental Coordination and Stakeholder Management Programme.

Virements were mainly impacting on the Goods and Services Economic Classification to an amount of R39,251 million which was used for mainly two Programmes of the Department, namely (i) Administration (R9.251 million); and (ii) Content Processing and Dissemination (R30 million).

### 3.1 Media Buying Update

<sup>2</sup> **Virement** is the process of moving money from one financial account or part of a budget (a plan for how the money will be spent) to a different one. For example, within the Government where one department (in this case an entity) underspends and another department needs more funding, the funds can be procured through **virement**

Media buying in support of the COVID-9 government intervention was implemented in two phases, each comprising of strategic variables of media platforms. For Phase One, targeted media platforms included the radio, community radio, television and leaflets and posters.

For an example, under leaflets and posters a total budget of R372 thousand was used for the design and translation of leaflet content, whereas in Phase Two there were 69 thousand posters printed and 3 million printed leaflets.

The added value during Phase One included Public Service Announcements, through business for South Africa and the private sector, as they ran a number of campaigns with government messaging on stay home. Collaboration with the Department of Health with the printing and distribution of leaflets and use of over 80 roadside screens flighted for free as added value for seven weeks were among the initiatives by the department. Electronic screens (Ranks and in Taxi television) were also installed under the added value and partnerships. Lastly, significant discounts were negotiated with all broadcasters including the SABC.

Phase Two expanded on the strategic media platforms variables by including billboards with a total budget of R12 million, wall murals totaling R2.2 million and electronic screen in taxi ranks totaling R3 million.

### **3.2 Public Service Announcements (PSAs)**

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) have been used successfully and they form part of a very key suite of communication platforms; while they are regulated via ICASA, there has been a high willingness amongst broadcasters to receive PSAs in a more coordinated and targeted manner.

A total of 19 radio stations were targeted under the PSA initiative, consisting of all media suppliers including the public broadcaster, Primedia, Medimark, United Stations, MSG Group Sales and YIRED; totaling R11 million.

For television, the main media platforms that are participating are eTV and the SABC. However, these PSAs have ended according to the department. There are also various social media outlets that the department utilizes to convey the government message on the COVID-19 pandemic including on Twitter, Facebook and government's websites presence.

Legacy projects post the COVID-9 pandemic include the Sentech discussions for dedicated line for community radio stations, the digitization of *Vuk'uzenzele* publication and radio studio live streaming capabilities.

### **3.3 Key revised allocations by economic classification**

In terms of Economic Classification, Goods and Services accounts for 24 percent of the total budget at R171.8 million. Compensation of Employees, Transfers and Subsidies and Capital Assets account for 76 percent of the total budget at R295.4 million; R249.2 million, and R4 million respectively.

## **4. IMPLICATIONS OF SHIFTED FUNDS ON PROGRAMMES OR PROJECTS**

There is a downward revision of R30 million from Brand South Africa as a result of funds reprioritised for COVID-19-related expenditures. These are the monies that were transferred to the Content Processing and Dissemination of GCIS.

A total of R9.251 million from Goods and Services for the suspension of non-essential goods and services such as travel and subsistence, catering, and venues and facilities, and reprioritisation of funds towards the department's office accommodation costs. This is presumably assumed that these monies that were transferred to the Administration Programme of the GCIS.

Lastly, there is a **reallocation** of R69,251 for Brand South Africa as a result of the revisions and virement of –R30 million from BSA and R39.251 under Goods and Services. R30 million was deducted from Transfers and Subsidies for the purpose.

## **5. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Select Committee on Public Enterprises and Communications, in interrogating the presentation by the GCIS, observed and made recommendations to the Minister comprising the following:

### **5.1 Observations**

The Committee noted:

- (i) with concern that some citizens are not complying to the government regulations;

- a. that the combating of the disease is by and large, dependent on GCIS and an increased budget allocation;
- (ii) that the R60 million was used for media space (electronic and print) products and distribution and advertising agencies; and
  - a. further noted that the adjusted amount was well spent and that due to the important work done by the Department during the pandemic, that it should be given a bigger budget;
- (iii) that emphasis of government campaign is primarily about behavioural change in order to combat the spread of the disease;
  - a. and note that such change usually happens over a long period of time and requires more financial resources than what has been already allocated;
- (iv) and commended GCIS for the sterling job to communicate government's message and ensure that all citizens, young and old, stay informed;
  - a. and further commended the alignment and mobilisation of all sectors around government's message;
  - b. that this energy should be sustained beyond the epidemic;
  - c. and positively acknowledges the utilisation of political constituency offices to communicate the government message;
- (v) and welcomed the unconventional communication methods deployed by the GCIS in townships and rural areas to ensure the message reaches everyone which would include;
  - a. the use of loud hailers; and
  - b. the use of drones;
- (vi) and commended the appointment of a permanent Director-General of the Department
  - a. and look forward in anticipation to the advertisements for filling of all vacant DDG posts;
- (vii) and welcome the upward revision of the GCIS budget for proper communication, particularly to communities that would ordinarily not receive mainstream news;
  - a. however, note with concern that the allocated budget is not nearly enough for the purpose;
- (viii) with regret the retrenchment of employees at Media24 as a result of the pandemic;
- (ix) that GCIS is in discussions with the industry to encourage branding of government's COVID-19 message on food parcels;

- a. and commend GCIS for utilising partnerships to supplement the government funding so as to communicate the government message on COVID-19;
- (x) with great concern that the youth is finding it hard to change their behaviour in response to the message; thereby infecting older members of our communities who are more vulnerable to the pandemic;
- (xi) with greater concern that the SABC is not receiving any compensation for broadcasting government information about the pandemic;
  - a. that the pandemic should not serve as justification to cripple a key government entity such as the SABC; and
- (xii) with appreciation that the revised budget will go a long way to help leverage partnerships of the GCIS with the industry at large.

## 5.2 Recommendations

The Committee recommends that the Minister should ensure that GCIS:

- (i) continue to lead by example to communicate the message without compromising good governance;
- (ii) finalise the appointment of senior and critical posts urgently;
- (iii) ensure that community broadcasters receive compensation for broadcasting government's COVID-19 message;
  - a. continue to encourage provincial and local government to utilise community media as a platform to communicate government messaging;
- (iv) provide a breakdown of estimated budget figures on the types media spent in rural and urban areas;
- (v) ensure continued and sustained branding of government's COVID-19 message on all food parcels;
- (vi) ensure that media houses are better supported in order to reduce job losses;
- (vii) engage National Treasury on ways to increase its budget allocation in order to fulfil its mandate;
- (viii) must consider having an input in assisting the budgeting for the unfunded mandate of the SABC considering the strategic role it play with its unfunded mandate;
- (ix) must direct advertising and other support for the community print and broadcasting media; and

- (x) continue to reinforce communication platforms of traditional leaders to communicate government message about the pandemic.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

The Committee resolved that it would:

- (i) continue to support the crucial work of GCIS during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (ii) continue to engage Sentech in order to ensure that the role of community radio stations in propagating government information, particularly in rural areas, is not compromised;
- (iii) continue to encourage private sector companies as well as government to think out of the box during these trying times; and
- (iv) invite the Media and Diversity Development Agency (MDDA) soon to report on supporting community media programmes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee reiterated that no government-branded PPEs should be partisan at any given time and should rather focus on propagating general government messages to fight the pandemic.

Lastly, the Committee urges the public to desist from stigmatising people directly or indirectly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and instead provide necessary support needed for recovery.

[The Economic Freedom Fighters objected to the Report.]

Report to be considered.