COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS BRIEFED ON PROCESS TO MERGE DEPARTMENTS AND RECONFIGURE ENTITIES
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The members of the Portfolio Committee on Communications were briefed on Tuesday morning by the Minister of Communications and senior management of the departments of Communications and of Telecommunication and Postal Services regarding the process to merge them into one, as well as the reconfiguration of their entities. The name of the new department will be the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT).

Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams told members of the committee that the process of establishing a new department is currently at an advanced stage. She has approved an organogram, and this was later agreed to by the Minister of the Department of Public Services and Administration in November 2019. “All staff members from both departments will be transferred to the new department in a transparent process as per Resolution, which was agreed upon and signed with the Public Service Collective Bargaining Council in October 2019. The transfer date is expected to be April 2020 and staff members will start receiving transfer letters from 20 March,” said Ms Ndabeni-Abrahams.

The configuration of government departments and state-owned entities was first announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa in his first State of the Nation Address in February 2018. He then announced the reconfiguration of the ministries of Communications and of Telecommunication and Postal Services into a single Ministry of Communications on November 2018.

The announcement gave effect to the fact that there would be a single Minister and Deputy Minister for two departments. Currently, both departments share human and financial resources through a joint Service Level Agreement.
The DCDT will merge the Broadband Infraco with Sentech to form a State ICT Infrastructure Company; dissolve the Universal Services Access Agency of South Africa and replace the Universal Service Access Fund with a Digital Development Fund; reconceptualise the iKamva Digital Skills Institute to realign it to fourth industrial revolution imperatives and emerging trends; and reconfigure Postbank in order to get a section 16 banking license.

Justice Molafo
3 March 2020