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BRIEFING NOTES FOR MINISTER

DoC Priorities for the upcoming MTEF period:

Top 5 Strategic Priorities

- Broadband
- Broadcasting Digital Migration
- E-Skills
- Postbank
- ICT Policy Review

Other Key Priorities

- Public and Community Broadcasting
- ICT Research
- Radio Frequency Spectrum
- Cyber Security

Top 5 Priorities

Broadband

In order to address market failures and the current status of Broadband in South Africa, the DoC will focus on finalising the Broadband Policy and Strategy to facilitate the deployment of Broadband backbone and access infrastructure especially in rural and underserved areas, with specific focus on public facilities.

Broadcasting Digital Migration (BDM)

The Department does acknowledge current challenges affecting specific facets of the BDM value chain which it is addressing. However, over the short to medium term, priority will be given to, amongst others, expanding national DTT and satellite coverage, allocations of subsidised STBs, STB installer training as well as provision of technical user-support.

ICT Policy Review

Over the short to medium term, the Department will finalise the ICT Policy review report which will feed into the development of the draft Green Paper. The Green Paper will be followed by a White Paper on National Integrated ICT Policy which will inform the drafting of the National ICT Bill.

Postbank

The Postbank plays a crucial role in providing financial services to targeted segments of our population, particularly rural and under-serviced communities. The Department in the short to medium term will prioritise the implementation of the Postbank Act with specific focus on, amongst others, incorporating the Postbank Company into a separate legal entity and processing the application for a banking license.

E-Skills

In order to address the current e-Skills gaps in the country, in the short term, the Department will prioritise the establishment of a Single Integrated Entity for e-Skills through the collaboration of the e-Skills Institute, NEMISA and ISSA. Over the short to medium term, this newly established Single Integrated Entity for e-Skills will focus on development of the National e-Skills Development Plan and will implement a range of e-Skills initiatives aimed at increasing the e-Skills capacity across Government, business, educations, civil society and organised labour.

Other Key Priorities

Public and Community Broadcasting

In terms of Public Broadcasting, over the short to medium term, the Department will focus on completing the Public Broadcasting Policy review towards the development of a Position Paper which will inform the Public Broadcasting (SABC) Bill and Act.

With regards to Community Broadcasting, the Department intends in the short term to finalise the Community Broadcasting Support Strategy and commence with immediate implementation after approval.

ICT Research

Programme 3 of the Department, Policy Research and Capacity Building, will have a specific research focus which will entail the development and implementation of a focused Research Programme aimed at supporting priority policies. Attention will be given to WSIS thematic areas aligned to Government priorities, publishing of revised e-Barometer indicators as well as ITU-D guidelines on Green ICT's.

Radio Frequency Spectrum

The Department's immediate focus will largely be on reviewing the current Radio Frequency Plan, in consultation with ICASA, taking into account the decisions of WRC-12 and the outcomes of the recent spectrum audit. Specific emphasis will be given to the spectrum requirements for security services.

Focus will also be given to issuing Policy Directions on the exploitation of the Digital Dividend to support ICT infrastructure and services.

Cybersecurity

Following the approval of the Cybersecurity Policy Framework, immediate focus will be on the establishment of the Cybersecurity Hub in support of a secure broadband infrastructure. The Department will also work towards the development of a Virtual Cybersecurity Hub.