

SA: Statement by the Department of Communications, on the ICT Policy Review Panel (04/03/2013)

STATEMENT

Minister of Communications Ms Dina Pule today announced the appointment of Mr Joe Mjwara as the chairperson of the ICT Policy Review Panel at a meeting of the ICT Policy Review Panel held in Pretoria.

Mr Lucky Masilela has been appointed as the deputy chairperson of ICT Policy Review Panel.

The meeting follows a two-day workshop that the ICT Policy Review Panel held in January 2013.

Minister Pule also announced the appointment of the following members as chairs of various committees:

Ms Libby Lloyd – Broadcasting Committee

Ms Tracy Cohen – Telecommunications

Ms Angie Maseko – Postal

Mr Tshilidzi Marwala – Infrastructure

Mr Sizwe Snail - e-Commerce

"I'd like to thank all the panel members for agreeing to serve their fellow citizens. We are convinced that we have appointed the best possible team to assist the government come up with the most robust and appropriate policies for the development and advancement of South Africa," says Minister Pule.

She requested the panel to work towards assisting the Department to come up with an ICT Policy White Paper by early next year.

Minister Pule expects the ICT Policy Review Panel to;

- Make recommendations on appropriate Policy and Regulatory frameworks that support the growth and development of the country;
- Make recommendations on implementation plans, options and time frames;
- Determine potential impact of the reform options and their impact on the industry, consumers and the community;
- Determine the principles that will underpin this new vision and policy framework;
- Identify progress and constraints in ICT Research and Development, ICT skills development, investment in ICTs and ICT industrial growth contributions.

The ICT Policy Review Panel is guided by the terms of reference that provide that the Panel must take account certain parameters, such as:

- The panel should provide a platform for stakeholders and co-ordination of the input by stakeholders
- The Panel must liaise with key stakeholders and agencies and ensure that their views are taken into account in the development of the final report
- The panel must provide a progress report within three months of starting its work and a final report within six months.

“We are mindful of the tight deadline that we need to work under. We are also mindful of the important result that the country expects from the process that has been initiated by the Minister.

“We shall work in a consensual manner as is possible. This is not a race for one idea to succeed,” said Mr Mjwara.

Minister Pule welcomed the Panel’s commitment and pledged to provide additional resources to assist the Panel complete its work within the deadline should it be necessary.

The Acting Director-General, Mr Gift Buthelezi, and the Deputy Director General for ICT Policy, Mr Themba Phiri, are leading a team of staff from the Department that will be working closely with the Panel to ensure that it delivers on its responsibilities.

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