



National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper

Unpacking the White Paper - Part 1

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The National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper, dated 26 September 2016, has been published. In this part 1 of a series, we will set out the proposed new institutional structures for regulating the ICT industries. Subsequent parts in the series will deal with specific issues, such as spectrum, universal access, the deployment of infrastructure, and Internet governance.

It is worth noting that all of the existing regulatory structures, including ICASA, USAASA and the .za DNA will be replaced with new structures, while some of the regulatory functions will also migrate to the Minister or other newly established Ministerial groupings.

The table below sets out how the old structures are to be replaced. And following are short descriptions of the various new structures, highlighted in the table.

Institutional Structures



| Old Institutions | New Institutions |
|--|--|
| | Digital Transformation Inter-Ministerial Committee |
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| Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services | Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services |
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| Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) | Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services Inter-Governmental Spectrum Working Group Rapid Deployment National Co-ordinating Centre New Consolidated / Economic Regulator New Broadcasting / Content Regulator |
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| | ICT Regulatory Review Panel |
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| Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) | Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services New Consolidated / Economic Regulator Digital Development Fund |
| | |
| .za Domain Name Authority (.za DNA) | Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services New Consolidated / Economic Regulator |

Descriptions

Digital Transformation Inter-Ministerial Committee

Cabinet will establish the Digital Transformation Inter-Ministerial Committee, which will be answerable to the Executive. According to the White Paper, the Committee will do two things.

- oversee the development of a detailed digital transformation plan and road map to realise and prioritise all policies included in the White Paper; and
- oversee the development of a detailed, integrated national digital government strategy and roadmap, based on a diagnostic assessment of the state of digital readiness across all spheres of government including an analysis of different capabilities and a review of the current systems and technologies.

Inter-Governmental Spectrum Working Group

Government will be responsible for spectrum policy-making, planning and allocation, and coordination of the roles of relevant stakeholders across all sectors. The Ministry will establish an Inter-Governmental Spectrum Working Group responsible for research, to develop country positions, and for allocation.

Rapid Deployment National Co-ordinating Centre

The Minister will establish the Rapid Deployment National Co-ordinating Centre and a Rapid Deployment Steering Committee to oversee the Centre. The Centre will work together with the Strategic Infrastructure Programme 15 established in terms of the Infrastructure Act. The responsibilities of the Centre are to support the rapid deployment of infrastructure and to interface with local municipalities to fast track rights of way and way-leave approvals.

New Consolidated / Economic Regulator

Regulation across the ICT value chain will be consolidated into one entity. The integrated regulator, sometimes also referred to as the economic regulator, will have responsibility for overseeing and promoting Internet governance, licensing and regulation of networks, services, spectrum and other scarce ICT-related resources, such as numbers, including domain names.

New Broadcasting / Content Regulator

Specific broadcasting content regulation (such as licensing and regulation of broadcasting services) will not fall under the new

economic regulator – pending the finalisation of the review of all broadcasting related policies which will consider the framework for policy and regulation of the audio and audio-visual content sector.

ICT Regulatory Review Tribunal

An ICT regulatory review tribunal will be established to appeal decisions of the regulator and/or its committees.

Digital-Development Fund

The USAASA will be dissolved and the Universal Service and Access Fund will be transformed into a new Digital-Development Fund, overseen by a Board, accountable to the Minister.