



MEDIA STATEMENT

SABC LAUNCHES ITS REVISED EDITORIAL POLICIES

Johannesburg- Friday, 03 July 2020 - The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), is pleased to announce the launch of its revised Editorial Policies, following extensive public consultations. The policies were launched in 2004 in line with the Broadcasting Act stipulations.

An initial attempt to review the policies in 2016 was declared invalid by the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA), due to insufficient engagement with the public during the process. The review of the policies being launched today has taken into account changes in the broadcasting environment, public interest obligations and evolving content consumption patterns and audience preferences. The process which took place in 2017 and 2018, included public hearing and written submissions.

The key changes in the revised Editorial Policies reflect the following: -

- A shift in editorial accountability and upward referral;
- Harmonizing of terminology, and rephrasing of the policies in line with digital publishing;
- The introduction of the Press Code to guide digital publishing;
- A new section on management of content on digital platforms; and
- A new chapter on the management and processing of complaints that are lodged with industry watchdogs and accountability structures.

The rationale behind the changes is to strengthen editorial controls by ensuring that editorial staff takes full accountability for editorial decisions, and that the public broadcaster delivers exceptionally on its public mandate. SABC Board Chairperson, Mr. Bongumusa Makhathini says, "Consistent with the ethos of the SABC Charter, the policies give an exclusive right to the editorial staff of the SABC, to exercise journalistic, programming and creative independence. The new set of policies is inclusive and has the required depth to ensure that the editorial independence of the SABC is protected and well-preserved". The SABC Board

would like to thank the public and all stakeholders for their contribution and ensuring that the process is carried out with the integrity it deserves.

The next review of the policies will take place in five (5) years. Following this launch, the policies will be lodged with ICASA, within 30 days.

The SABC's Editorial Policies can be accessed on www.sabc.co.za/editoriapolicies

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