the dr&pw

Department:
Roads and Public Works
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
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DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) PROCEDURE: HELPDESK AND SERVICE MANAGEMENT GUIDE

Version 2

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1. INTRODUCTION

Client service is critical to the success of the Information & Communication Technology Unit (ICT). ICT is committed to excellent client service and, in a continual effort to achieve this goal, an Incident Management (IM) process is employed. The IM process is a framework that provides standards of responsiveness to our clients and a consistent methodology for problem resolution. This manual describes our IM model and overall process, as well as specific IM policies and their associated procedures.

2. ICT INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (IM) PROCESS

2.1 Definition

The ICT Incident Management (IM) process is the process by which **incidents** reported by clients are effectively and efficiently received, recorded, processed and resolved by the ICT Unit. The IM process begins with a client's first contact with ICT staff and continues through incident resolution and closure. It encompasses standards for client communication throughout the process. ICT uses the service management system **"SPICEWORKS"** as a tracking tool for incidents and knowledgebase development.

There are 5 phases of the IM process:

- **Submission:** In this phase, the client submits ICT requests for service via mechanisms which ICT provides. ICT will collect and process all requests according to established guidelines.
- **Verification:** In the second phase, a SPICEWORKS ticket is initiated and a determination made as to whether the request is an ICT issue (if not, the client is redirected).
- **Definition:** After verifying that the request is within the ICT domain, an ICT staff member completes the Definition phase by gathering and documenting all the necessary information to start resolving the ticket.
- **Tracking**: The Tracking phase begins when the ticket is "saved" (and a "Ticket #" generated) and continues until the incident is resolved. It includes all aspects of collecting additional data about the incident or request, conducting further research, and producing results and findings. One of the most important parts of this phase is Ticket Ownership, i.e., that once an incident is reported, there is always an assigned Technician/3rd Party Service Provider and that Technician/3rd Party Service Provider is actively working towards resolving the problem.
- **Closure:** The final phase comprises appropriate closure and follow up with the client. The client should be asked to confirm that the incident is resolved to their satisfaction, after which the ICT staff responsible for the Ticket completes all final documentation.

2.2 Elements of IM

Definitions of some of the elements of the IM process are included in this section.

Incident: In the context of the ICT IM process, an **incident** is an inquiry, problem reported or any other request for assistance, made by a client or staff member of the **DRPW** to one or more ICT staff members. ***Note: An incident, as defined here, is not an "ICT Project" for Project*** Management information). An incident may *trigger* an ICT Project. But once that happens, the incident would be considered resolved, referring to the new project in ICT resolution, and the PM process would proceed.

SPICEWORKS Help Desk: All initial requests for ICT services are processed through the following mechanisms (phone, email or online fault logging.) and the SPICEWORKS Help Desk System (SPICEWORKS) is the service management system used to record and track these support requests, provide solutions, build a knowledgebase of **DRPW** solutions, and generate reports of ICT support activity.

SPICEWORKS "Ticket": In the request tracking database in SPICEWORKS, each record containing the information about an incident is referred to as a **Ticket**. This Ticket is the vehicle by which an incident is tracked, assigned to the appropriate ICT resource, reported on, etc. Each Ticket has a sequential number assigned to it by SPICEWORKS and Ticket are often referred to by their number, as in "Ticket #121067." The terms "incident" and "Ticket" might be used interchangeably at times, but typically "incident" refers to the event (the problem, the request, or the inquiry) and "Ticket" refers to the SPICEWORKS database record.

Client Relationship: Maintaining strong client relationships goes hand in hand with providing solutions for our clients. For incidents where no quick resolution can be found, every opportunity should be taken to understand our clients concerns – not just what the current problem is. In addition, timely and consistent client contact while the incident is being resolved is of paramount importance (see **5.1 Client Contact Standards**.) At all times, ICT staff members are to conduct themselves in a professional manner, communicate clearly and accurately, to our clients.

Documentation: In each step of the process, it is important that clear, accurate and complete documentation is performed. **Documentation** for an incident includes information that is input in SPICEWORKS, including all mandatory fields as well as Work Log entries and attachments associated with the SPICEWORKS Ticket for that incident. This information is critical for tracking issues and incidents and for developing a knowledge base of problems and solutions experienced by the ICT community (see complete documentation guidelines in **4.1 Documentation**).

3. ICT IM STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP'S)

Standard operating procedures (SOP's) for each of the five phases of our ICT IM process are defined in this section.

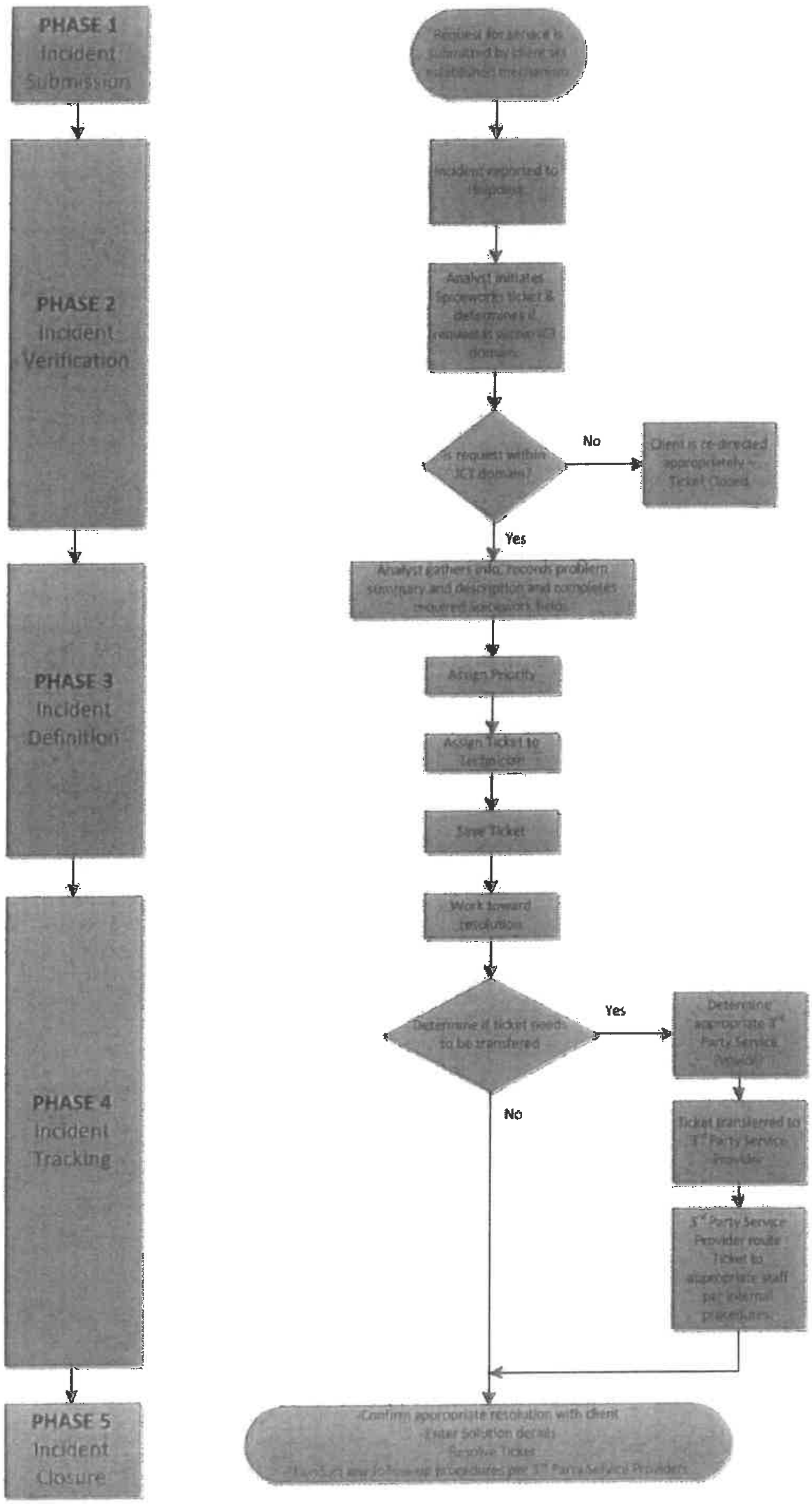
3.1 Phase 1 - Submission

In this phase the client submits requests for service via mechanisms which ICT provides. ICT will collect and process all requests according to established guidelines.

3.2 Phase 2 - Verification

In this phase, a SPICEWORKS Ticket is initiated and a determination made as to whether the request is an ICT issue.
Steps:
1. Initiate a Ticket in SPICEWORKS, input **required fields.**

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT WORKFLOW CHART



2. Determine if the request is within the domain of ICT.
3. If so, continue with **Definition.** If not, redirect client appropriately, and continue with **Closure**.

3.3 Phase 3 - Definition

After verifying that the request is within the ICT domain, ICT staff completes the Definition phase by gathering and documenting all necessary information to start resolving the Ticket. This information is recorded in the **Summary** and **Description** fields of the SPICEWORKS Ticket. In addition to the **Summary** and **Description**, there are several other fields, some optional and some required, that must be captured in the Ticket record before the Definition phase is complete Details of specific steps can be found in the SPICEWORKS Training docs, but an overview of the minimum fields required to create a Ticket follows.

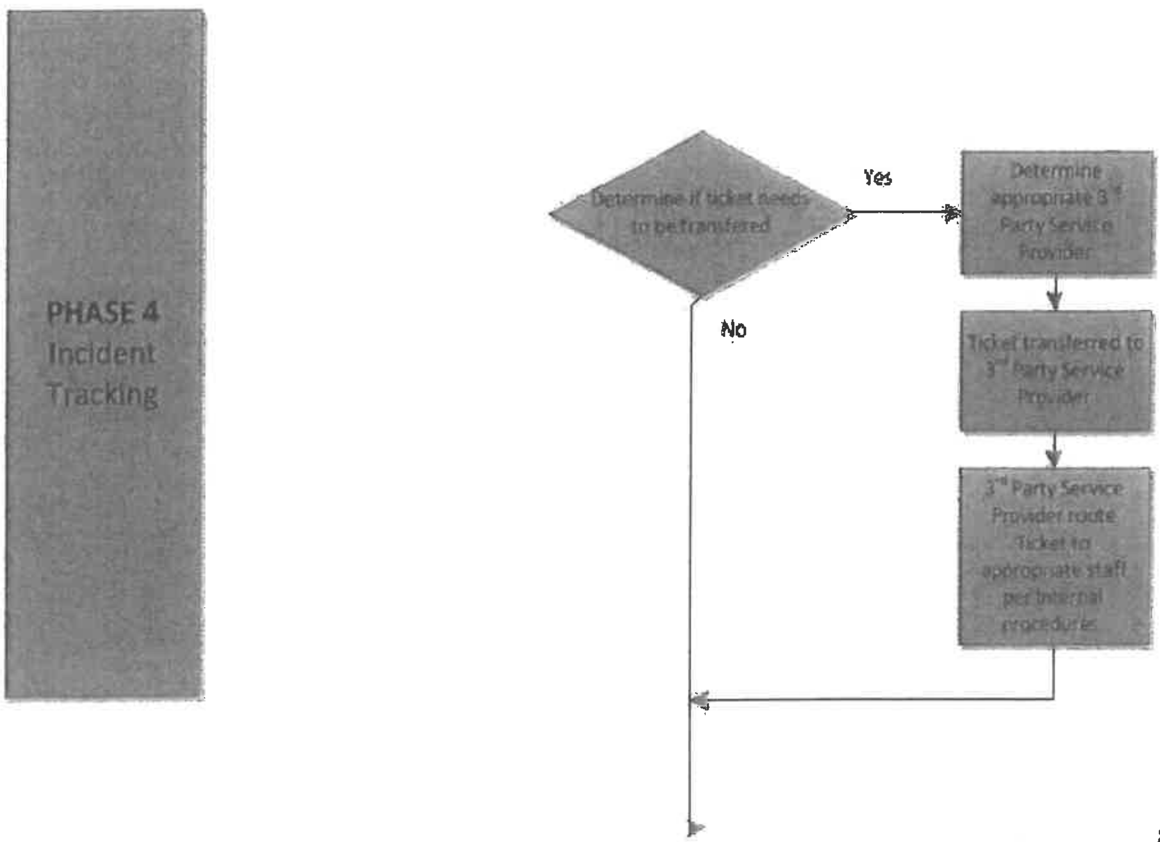
Contact- This is the email address of the requester.
Summary - A very brief statement summarizing service request.
Description – A full description of the service request.
Category – A field serving as a three level categorization of the subject of the request.

Priority The Priority field in Spiceworks is used to categorize Ticket in terms of their criticality, expected response, and required client contact schedule. It is also ultimately used for reporting purposes – queries and reports can be generated using this parameter.

Priority Code	Examples
1 High	· Critical service interruption impacting multiple buildings · A mission critical application is not available
2 Medium	· Two or more users are unable to perform critical business functions (e.g. network problems isolated to a particular office or building, primary 3rd Party Service Provider specific application not available)
3 Low	· Two or more users are experiencing a problem that does not impact critical business functions (e.g. printer problems when another printer is available, problems with noncritical desktop applications)

3.4 Phase 4 - Tracking

The 4th Phase, Tracking, begins when the Ticket is "saved" (and a "Ticket #" generated) and continues until the incident is resolved. It includes all aspects of collecting additional data about the incident/request, conducting further research, and producing results and findings. A flowchart of Phase 4 of the IM process is included below.



Steps:
1. After the incident is logged in as a Spiceworks Ticket and saved**, work toward resolution** of the request continues.

2. Determination is made whether Ticket needs to be transferred from Helpdesk and/or Service Operations & Support to a 3rd Party Service Provider. If "no", then process is continued in Phase 5 – Closure.

3. If a Ticket does need to be transferred, it is assigned to the appropriate 3rd Party Service Provider, following Assignment procedures (see **4.2 Policy: Help Desk Ticket and Task Assignment).**

4. At the individual 3rd Party Service Provider level, the Ticket is assigned to individuals, tracked, and processed according to the 3rd Party Service Provider's own processing procedures. These procedures may vary from 3rd Party Service Provider to 3rd Party Service Provider, as long as they comply with all IM Standards, such as "Ticket Acceptance Standards", etc. (for a list of the IM Standards, see **5.0 ICT IM STANDARDS – COMPLIANCE).**

5. During the duration of Phase 4, while the Ticket is being worked toward resolution, **it is of the utmost importance that the client is contacted in a timely and regular way,** consistent with the IM "Client Contact Standards" (**5.1 Client Contact Standards**).

6. Upon resolution of the incident, continue with **Phase 5 – Closure.**

3.5 Phase 5 - Closure

This final phase of the IM process comprises appropriate closure and follow-up with the client. Whenever possible, the client should be asked to confirm that the incident is resolved to their satisfaction, after which, the Ticket owner completes all final documentation. The steps below are the responsibility of the Ticket owner.

Steps:
1. Determine that incident has been resolved appropriately. Best practices of incident management call for the Ticket owner to confirm with the client that the incident is resolved to their satisfaction and that no further action is expected from ICT staff. Direct confirmation may be impractical in every Ticket, however, such as email requests for specific information or unambiguous requests such as for email aliases. However, the attempt should be made and there is functionality within the Spiceworks application to confirm that a client contact has been attempted at Ticket resolution.

2. Attempt final client contact to confirm resolution **– REQUIRED FIELD.**

3. Add any further information in the Ticket to complete documentation of troubleshooting and Ticket progress.

4. Enter **Solution Details – REQUIRED FIELD.** The final statement of how the problem was resolved should be entered here. As with all documentation included in the Spiceworks Ticket, the Solution Details should adhere to the **Documentation** guidelines.

5. Place Ticket in "**Resolved**" Status.

6. Conduct any follow-up procedures in place for your 3rd Party Service Provider. **Open a new Ticket for additional, unrelated issues.** If a Ticket contains more than one unrelated issue, it is appropriate to document the resolution of the issue that *has* been resolved, open a new Ticket with the further issues, cross reference the Ticket #'s in the original and new Ticket, and resolve the original Ticket.

4. ICT IM POLICIES

Procedures and guidelines are detailed below for various components of the IM Process.

4.1 Documentation

All information that is recorded in a Spiceworks Ticket, including Description, Work Log entries, and Solution Details, is considered "documentation" for the incident and should follow the guidelines below:

Concise - As brief as possible while including all information necessary to describe the situation.

Clear- No ambiguity, no cryptic explanations or nonstandard shorthand or abbreviations, correct spelling and grammar.

Complete - Include problem description and detailed steps taken as to resolution – will facilitate ability to resolve future similar problems.

Correct - Accuracy is critical.

Clean - Language is non-judgmental and professional Call information should be able to be read by either the original client or anyone else in the **DRPW** client community without causing controversy. Ideally, a person with no prior knowledge of a situation should be able to understand the problem and perform ICT solution simply by reading the Description and Solution Details. These fields must clearly and quickly convey relevant information in a professional manner. "Professional" means that the writing would not be an issue if it were read in a meeting with the client, the author and/or ICT management. Attention must be paid to spelling, grammar, accuracy and tone.

GOALS FOR TICKET DOCUMENTATION

- Documentation should be concise, clear, complete, correct, and clean.
- Anyone viewing the Ticket should be able to discern:
    - what the problem is,
    - what the current status is,
    - what is being done to resolve it,
    - who has ownership,
    - and ultimately what the exact resolution was.

4.2 Policy: Help Desk Ticket Assignment

A combination of Tickets and Tasks will be used for Spiceworks service requests. The following polices are in place for how "Individual" and "3rd Party Service Providers" assignments for Tickets and Tasks will be made.

- **Assignment to "Individual"**: Staff can assign Ticket to another member of the ICT Unit, but only if it is agreed by both parties.

- **Assignment to "3rd Party Service Providers"**: Staff can assign Ticket to 3rd Party Service Providers based on the nature of the resolution required.(eg. Internet line is down.)

- **Submitter (creator) of the Ticket.***

If a Ticket requires work to be done by multiple technicians, the Ticket will remain assigned to the primary technician and Tasks will be assigned from that Ticket to any other staff member working the issue.

- **Misrouted Tickets** will be handled via the Request Reassignment function; IT Helpdesk Management will be responsible for approval and execution of the reassignment request for the misrouted Ticket.

Procedures for these policies will vary based on the nature of the resolution.

4.2.1 Procedures: Non – 3rd Party Related Tickets

Assignment while creating Ticket

Scenario 1 – You create a Ticket that will be worked on by yourself.

1. Create and save the Ticket whilst assigning the ticket to you.

Scenario 2 - You create a Ticket that will handled by another ICT Support Technician.

1. Create and assign the Ticket to the appropriate ICT Support Technician.
2. Monitor the progress status of the Ticket by doing regular follow-ups and updating the client.

This is the only time a Ticket may be assigned to another Staff member.

4.2.2 Procedures: 3rd Party Related Tickets

Assignment while creating Ticket

Scenario 1- You create a Ticket that will be worked on be a 3rd Part Service Provider.

1. Create a Ticket and in the **"Related To"** field indicated the name of the Service Provider and assign the ticket to yourself.
2. Monitor the progress status of the Ticket by doing regular follow-ups and updating the client until the Ticket has been resolved.

5. ITS IM STANDARDS COMPLIANCE

This section defines each set of IM Standards which are currently in effect. Details of determining whether or not the processing of a service request is in compliance with these standards and what monitoring steps are taken in association with these standards are also included. Compliance to these standards is expected on all ICT service requests.

5.1 Client Contact Standards

When a Ticket has been logged into Spiceworks and reached the Tracking phase of the IM process, if it is not resolved during the initial client contact, the **Client Contact Standards** apply to all open Tickets. The required frequency of contact depends on the Priority level of the Case as shown below:

Client Contact Standards	
Priority	**Priority Schedule**
1 High	Helpdesk updates impacted clients or client point of contact every 2 hours until problem is resolved.
2 Medium	Helpdesk updates client with status every 2 days until resolution
3 Low	Helpdesk updates client with status every 3 days until resolution
On all Priority Cases, when standard not met, notifications are sent every 30 minutes pending Client Contact work log entry by Assignee. 1 st round of notifications to: Assignee (Telephonic) 2 nd (and continuing) round of notifications to: Assignee and Group Manager (email list)	

5.2 Ticket Acceptance Standards

When a Ticket has been logged into Spiceworks and reached the Tracking phase of the IM process, if it is not resolved during the initial client contact, the **Ticket Acceptance Standards** apply to all open Tickets.

"Acceptance" is indicated in the Spiceworks Ticket by the Assigned To staff by indicating "Work in Progress in the Activity Response". The Ticket Acceptance Standard looks at the time elapsed from the Ticket has being assigned to a Support Technician to the time it is set to "Work in Progress." The elapsed time permitted depends on the Priority level of the Case as shown below:

Ticket Acceptance Standards	
Priority	**Schedule**
1High	Ticket is accepted (update with "Work in Progress") by Assigned to Staff within 15 minutes of assignment. If Case is not accepted within that timeframe, notifications are sent to Support Technician / IT Manager every 15 minutes until it is accepted.
2 Medium	Ticket is accepted (update with "Work in Progress") by Assigned to Staff within 30 minutes of assignment. If Ticket is not accepted within that timeframe, notifications are sent to IT Manager / Support Technician every 30 minutes until it is accepted.
3 Low	Ticket is accepted (update with "Work in Progress") by Assigned to Staff within 4 hours of assignment. If Case is not accepted within that timeframe, notifications are sent to IT Manager / Support Technician every 60 minutes until it is accepted.

5.3 Ticket Update Frequency Standards

When an ticket has been logged into Spiceworks and reached the Tracking phase of the IM process, if it is not resolved during the initial client contact, the **Ticket Update Frequency Standards** apply to all open Tickets. **"Ticket Update"** is indicated in the Spiceworks Ticket by the Activity Response of a Ticket Log entry. This entry can be made by either the "Assigned To" staff or by the Helpdesk Administrator. The required frequency depends on the Priority level of the Ticket as shown below:

Ticket Update Frequency Standards	
Priority	**Schedule**
1High	Activity log is updated within 60 minutes of Ticket creation and every 60 minutes thereafter until resolution. If standard not met, notifications are sent every 60 minutes.
2 Medium	Activity log is updated within 4 hrs of Ticket creation and every 4 hours thereafter until resolution. If standard not met, notifications are sent every 4 hours.
3 Low	Activity log is updated within 2 days of Ticket creation and every 2 days thereafter until resolution. If standard not met, notifications are sent once every business day.
On all Priority Tickets, when standard not met, notifications are sent on the schedule specified above, in 2 rounds of notifications: 1st round of notifications to: Assignee 2nd (and continuing) round of notifications to: Assignee and IT Manager	

6. APPROVAL AND REVIEW

6.1 This policy will be effective from the date of its approval

6.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every five (5) years or any time as circumstances changes or any change required by law.

6.3 Any deviations from this policy must be approved by the Accounting Officer.

Approved/ Not Approved

Comments:

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ACCOUNTING OFFICER

KHOLEKILE NOGWILI

05.03.19

DATE