

the dr&pw

Department:
Roads and Public Works
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENTAL POLICY ON
UTILIZATION OF THE LANDLINE
TELEPHONES**

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1. DEFINITIONS

HOD	Head of Department
Department (DR&PW)	Department of Roads and Public Works
Direct Dialing Facility	Telephone lines not linked to the switchboard
International Calls	Telephone calls made whose destination is outside the borders / geographic boundaries of the Republic
Landline Calls	Means calls made / dialed using the fixed telephone line
Official	Person who has been appointed, notwithstanding that such appointment may be on probation, to a post contemplated in section 8(1)(b) or 8(3)(c) of Public Service Act.....
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act, Act 1 of 1999 as amended
PIN	Personal Identification Number or code, which is used to gain access to the department's telephone system
Private Telephone Calls	Telephone calls made using any telephone or facsimile machine for DR&PW account where such calls are not directly linked to the performance of the Department's business. Such telephone calls are deemed to be in respect of the private business of the employee or official concerned.
Programme Managers	Means Senior Managers appointed by the Accounting Officer to manage a specific programme
Responsibility Manager	Means Managers responsible for a specific unit
Unauthorized persons	Means people who are not employees of the department.
Write-offs	Means equipment that are no longer functional.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. The Department of Roads and Public Works intends to promote economic, efficient and proper usage of its telephone system through the development of this policy.
- 2.2. The regulation and management of telephone facilities is the prerogative of department's senior management.
- 2.3. The provision of access to the telephone facilities enhances employees' productive capacity and is to be used primarily for business purposes.
- 2.4. The department reserves the right to grant, restrict and withdraw, at its sole discretion and with regards to any employee; the aforementioned privileges in respect of the telephone facilities as and when necessary in order to accommodate the operational requirements of the department.
- 2.5. Abuse of the telephone system facility is an offence and any employee who is found to have misused or abused this facility; disciplinary action will be taken against that employee.

3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- 3.1. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996), section 215 and 217,
 - 3.2. The Public Finance Management Act no.1 of 1999 (as amended by Act no 29 of 1999):
 - Section 38 dealing with general responsibilities of accounting officers and specifically subsection 38 (1)(a)(i), 38(1)(b),38(1)(d),38(1)(h) and
 - Section 45 dealing with the responsibilities of other officials.
 - 3.3. Treasury Regulations issued in terms of the Public Finance Management Act,1999, Section 8.2.2 (Approval of Expenditure), 10.1.1 and 10.1.2 (Asset Management)
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4. OBJECTIVE

This policy is formulated in order:-

- 4.1. To provide support service and effective guidelines for the management and usage of landline telephones within Roads and Public Works department.
- 4.2. To regulate the utilisation, curb abuse and reduce costs associated with the usage of the landline telephone facility within the department.
- 4.3. To ensure effective, efficient and economic usage of the telephone facility as a communication tool of the department.
- 4.4. To ensure that all officials are allocated with this important facility and a monthly limit is set for the utilization of landline for each official.
- 4.5. To ensure that officials take full responsibility for private calls made by paying amounts due as a result of utilizing the official landline telephone for private matters.

5. PRINCIPLES, VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

This policy is intended to reflect the department's commitment to the principles, goals and ideals described in the department vision and core values.

6. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

- 6.1. This policy covers the usage of a landline telephone system all of the department's employees where the regular use of a landline is necessary or useful to meet the requirements of the job.
- 6.2. Monthly limits have been determined / set by senior management and are subject to regular review.
- 6.3. The Departmental officials who qualify for the usage of landline telephone facility as provided for in this policy are the following:
 - All permanent employees of the department



- All employees on contracts; including interns and learners; and
- The consultants within the department.

7. PROCEDURES

7.1. Access to and Utilization of a Telephone System Facility

- It is the responsibility of the department to provide all its offices (including regional, district and local offices) with a satisfactory and reliable Telephone Facility;
- All employees of the department will be assigned a landline telephone facility;
- All officials shall be assigned a "pin code" which will ensure some protection to the landline facility allocate;
- The switchboard of the Department is undated with incoming calls, officials enjoys the privilege of direct lines. Although the switchboard[s] has pin-code function to avoid misuse by officials; it will be impracticable for all employees' calls to be directed through the switchboard, due to line and staff shortages.
- The Department may centralize its telephone operating system and install one or more switchboards through which all outgoing and incoming calls shall be routed;
- The Departmental switchboard[s] shall be housed in a safe and secure environment and the switchboard instrument as well as the office in which the switchboard is housed shall be provided with a lockable device or devices, the keys of which shall be in the possession of the Switchboard Operator[s] duly appointed;
- It shall be the responsibility of the Switchboard Operator[s] to ensure that no unauthorized person obtains access to the switchboard[s] of the Department; and



- It shall be the duty of the person making the call, before dialing the number required to indicate whether the call is official or private in nature.

7.2. Control Measures for the Utilization of Telephone Facility

- Where an employee has a direct dialing facility, that employee shall be obliged to maintain the telephone log book and submit it to the respective authority at the end of the month;
 - No official will be allowed to make international calls on the landline Telephone Facility without a prior approval of the HOD;
 - No official shall make a call on behalf of or allow any unauthorized person to make a private telephone call from either a private telephone line or from the switchboard of the department;
 - Employees will be held responsible for the management and safeguarding of their "pin codes";
 - Employees shall be allocated a monthly limit on telephone calls to be made;
 - Currently the applicable limit for the usage of the telephone facility is R 300 for all departmental officials with the exception of managers whose limit is R 500. It is proposed in this policy that the limits should be reviewed as per 7.6 below;
 - It is therefore; imperative that for control purpose, management encourages employees to indicate their private telephone calls by using applicable pin code system when dialing;
 - At the end of every month, Communication Unit or Programme Manager in the case of Regional Offices will print and forward telephone lists, indicating both private and business telephone calls and faxes, to Line Managers/Unit Heads;
 - Every Line Manager/Programme Manager/Head of the Unit must personally examine telecommunication accounts relating to lines or extensions allocated to employees under his/her supervision; and
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- He or she shall make such relevant comments for attention or information of the relevant person, his or her supervisor, or any other official in the department, which shall where necessary be used as evidence should a disciplinary hearing or such appropriate actions be necessary to be taken due to persistent abuse by an employee.

7.3. Payments of Accounts

- The Communication Unit of the Department shall, on a monthly basis, make printouts under the relevant employee's name of telephone calls made by each employee by means of his/her PIN number for that particular month;
 - The printout will be forwarded to the Head of the Unit/Programme Manager/Regional Manager for scrutiny and thereafter distributed to relevant officials;
 - On receipts of the account; after thorough examination employees are urged to settle their private calls account at the end of every month to avoid accumulation of the account. All payments transactions shall be recorded and properly documented for reference purposes;
 - Every month, the telephone administrator at the switchboard shall follow-up on all outstanding payments to ensure that there is no accumulation of monies owed by official as a result of private telephone calls;
 - Programme Managers and Regional Managers must make arrangements with employees whose account for month remains unpaid at the end of the month for payment of the outstanding balance, if any; and
 - All calls made from a shared facility must be monitored by the Line Manager/Programme Manager, who must implement a procedure to ensure recovery of costs for private usage (e.g. for facsimiles).
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7.4. Private Calls

- a) Employees must use telephones with discretion and restrict private telephone calls to a bare minimum time;
- b) The cost of all private telephone calls made shall be recoverable (settled by cheque or cash) from the employee at the end of the month during which the telephone call was made;
- c) Failure by the employee to settle the account having received the printout of private calls will result in a salary deduction request being sent by the Unit/Programme Manager to HRM the following month in order to recover the outstanding amount before the next payroll cutoff; and
- d) Cognisance must be taken of the fact that the availability of the telephone facility for private use constitutes a privilege and not a right.

7.5. Monthly Print-out of Private Calls

- (a) Every employee is required to account for any telephone call made by means of his/her PIN number, whether official or private;
 - (b) Private calls (dialed on the private call code) shall be due and payable by the employee concerned, failing to settle will result in automatic deduction from employees' salaries, based on the acknowledgement of dialing a private number with the use of such code;
 - (c) The Department's Communication Unit shall, notwithstanding paragraph (b), on a monthly basis, make printouts under the relevant employee's name of telephone calls made by each employee by means of his/her PIN number for the previous month;
 - (d) The printouts referred to in paragraph (c) above will be distributed by no later than the 28th day of each calendar month, or the first working day thereafter, to all Managers of Departments for each employee who will, thereafter, identify all telephone calls made;
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- (e) Every employee shall highlight all private calls made by means of his/her PIN number;
- (f) Highlighted telephone printouts must be returned to the Managers of Departments;
- (g) The Managers of Departments shall no later than the 7th day of every calendar month, or the first working day thereafter, failure by employee to settle (cash/cheque) forward the telephone printouts of every employee to the Section: Salaries and Wages of the Department: Expenditure and Assets in order for the said section to deduct the costs of any private telephone calls, not already deducted in terms of paragraph (b), from the salary of the employee concerned; and
- (h) Subsequent queries and adjustments regarding private call deductions from salaries will only be effected when requested in writing and authorized by the employee's relevant Manager or Director, as the case may be.

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7.6. Monthly limits and budget implications

- The Regional Managers and the Director: Supply Chain Management shall submit budget proposals to be approved by the HOD on the recommendation of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO); to ensure that all expenses relating to the utilization of the Telephone System Facility are budgeted for in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework;
- Utilization of the Telephone System Facility should be affordable and within budgetary constraints of the department.

The monthly limits which are inclusive of all costs for departmental landline telephones are as follows:

LEVEL	MONTHLY LIMIT
MEC and HEAD OF DEPARTMENT	Unlimited
SENIOR MANAGEMENT	R 1000
UNIT/PROGRAMME MANAGERS	R 500
SECRETARIES	R 400
ALL OTHER OFFICIALS	Maximum R 300

- If the monthly limit has been reached the affected directorate should motivate to the Communication Unit and HOD.

7.7. Barring of Telephone Lines and Prohibited Calls

Calls are automatically barred by the service provider as soon as the stipulated limit has been reached. No staff members are allowed to make international calls; except for the MEC and HOD and telephones lines shall be suitably barred on the basis of this classification.

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- The following calls are prohibited
 - Collect calls
 - Commercial sex / gambling / betting calls
 - International calls, unless prior authorization by the HO has been granted

7.8. Non-Compliance

- It is the responsibility of an employee to ensure that his/her private telephone calls are properly indicated by using the pin-code system.
 - Telephone (print-outs) lists must be scrutinized by the Line Manager/Programme Manager/Unit Managers and any discrepancies identified must be investigated and the necessary corrective action taken.
 - It remains the responsibility of an employee to check his/her private telephone calls and in case where there was a payroll deduction made to ensure that the correct deduction was made in terms of this policy from his/her salary.
 - Random checks will be carried out throughout the year to ensure adherence to this policy.
 - Line Managers/Programme Managers/Unit Managers must take cognisance of available alternatives in order to prevent abuse of telephone facilities.
 - Consideration should be given where necessary to barring an employee from using the relevant facilities.
 - An employee, and not the Line Manager/Programme Manager Unit Head, will be held liable for non-payment and for non-compliance with this policy.
 - Any failure to comply with the Policy will be viewed as a serious disciplinary transgression and could lead to disciplinary action taken against the offending employee in terms of the Public Service Regulations and Code of Conduct policies.
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8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 8.1. Programme managers are responsible for the implementation of the policy.
- 8.2. The Directorate Policy and Planning will monitor and evaluate compliance and impact of these guidelines by all programs and sub-programs in the Department.
- 8.3. Supply Chain Management is responsible for the commitment and renewal of all telecommunication contracts with service providers.
- 8.4. Programme and Responsibility Managers are responsible for the monitoring of the expenditure and budget.
- 8.5. Financial Accounting: Division - Theft and Losses are responsible for the safeguarding and maintenance of the assets.

9. FINANCIAL RESOURCE AND BUDGETARY IMPLICATION

The Programme / Responsibility Managers of the Department shall submit budgetary requests to be approved by the Accounting Officer, on the recommendation of the Chief Financial Officer, to ensure that all expenses relating to the use of telephone facilities are budgeted for through the medium expenditure framework.

Use of telephone facilities shall be affordable and remain within the relevant budgets.


The total projected commitment in terms of this policy is _____ per year.

10. POLICY ADOPTION AND REVIEW

- 10.1. This policy is effective from 1 February 2011.
- 10.2. This policy shall be assessed in one year from its effective date to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness. This policy may be assessed before that time as necessary to reflect substantial organisational etc. changes at the Department or any change required by law.
- 10.3. Deviations from this policy must be approved by the Accounting Officer.



11. APPROVAL


Approved/ ~~Not approved~~
Comments:

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ACCOUNTING OFFICER

16/01/2012

DATE