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Department:
Communications
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

PROGRESS REPORT AGAINST THE MINISTER'S 20 AUGUST 2013 COMMITMENTS

TO THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS (PCC)

PROGRESS UP TILL 23 MAY 2014

INTRODUCTION

On 20 August 2013, Minister Yunus Carrim presented to the Portfolio Committee on Communications (PCC) a strategy and programme for the period until the 2014 elections.

The strategy focused mainly on the following areas:
- ❑ A more effective DoC
- ❑ A less fragmented and fractious ICT sector
- ❑ Finalisation of the Broadband Policy, Strategy and Plan
- ❑ An effective Spectrum Policy
- ❑ A Policy Directive on Transparent Pricing Policy
- ❑ Setting the foundations for further reducing the costs to communicate
- ❑ Beginning the Roll-out of Digital Migration
- ❑ Greater focus on Rural and other underserviced areas
- ❑ National Address System
- ❑ More effective SOC Oversight
- ❑ Corporatisation of Postbank
- ❑ ICT Policy Review Green Paper
- ❑ National ICT Forum
- ❑ Community Broadcasting Support Policy
- ❑ Implementing the Legislative Programme
- ❑ Merger of e-Skills organisations

This progress report aims at providing a summary of the key achievements as at 23 May 2014 at the end of the Minister's term of office.
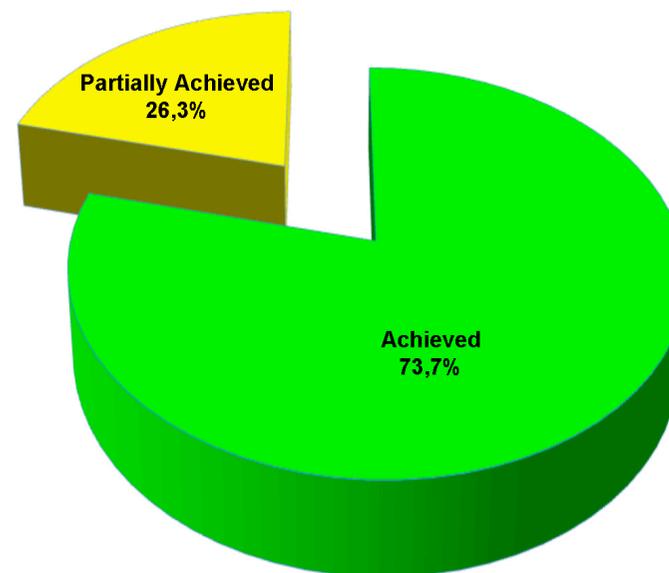
Within the above-mentioned 16 focus areas, 19 specific major commitments were identified. The implementation of these 19 commitments were monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. We gave a progress report to Parliament on 5 November 2013 and 18 and 19 **??** February 2014.

Some of the targets are ongoing and cannot be fully achieved as such. As per the graphs below, the Department fully achieved or almost fully achieved 14 of the 19 (73,7%) of the commitments, while 5 commitments (26,3%) targets were not achieved. However significant progress was made on most of the targets not achieved. Exactly what progress was made as a whole is best assessed but considering all the activities set out in this document.

AUGUST 20TH COMMITMENTS MADE BY MINISTER TO PCC

COMMITMENT	DUE DATE	ACTUAL PROGRESS	STATUS
1. Ensure a more effective DoC	2014 Elections	❑ DDG: SOCs Oversight & Enterprise Development; DDG: Information Society Development & Research and DDG: ICT Infrastructure Development were appointed and have assumed their duties in the Department. This, for the first time, ensures a full complement of DDGs in the Department. ❑ The Chief Financial Officer (CFO); Chief Director: HRM; Chief Director: Internal Audit & Risk Management assumed their duties in January 2014. The Director: Internal Audit started work in Feb 2014. However, the CFO subsequently resigned following the Department engaging with him about information received about his misconduct in a previous appointment. ❑ 21 SMS positions have been filled. 9 posts are currently being advertised. ❑ 58 non-SMS positions were advertised internally and 16 critical SMS positions were advertised in the Department for a period up to November 2013. Of the 58 advertised internally, 14 positions have been filled. 36 have been re-advertised internally and 8 positions have been advertised through the DPSA circular in March 2014. The process of filling these positions is underway. ❑ All SMS and non-SMS employees have been migrated into the revised organisational structure and the process was finalized on 15 January 2014. ❑ The integrated Action Plan developed to address issues raised by the Auditor General in the 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 financial years is being implemented and monitored by the Audit Steering Committee. ❑ An operations Committee has been established and is fully operational to review all the policies of the Department and align them with DPSA and National Treasury	

COMMITMENT	DUE DATE	ACTUAL PROGRESS	STATUS
		Regulations.	
		❑ The Department is in the process of finalising an Internal Control Framework which cuts across multiple functional areas and will encourage compliance and reduce negative audit findings. This will also ensure alignment between individual performance agreements and the Annual Performance Plan.	
		❑ An SIU investigation into the Department's Media Corner Contract is in progress. 2 senior managers resigned following allegations of wrong-doing which did not involve abuse of the Department's resources. Another senior official is facing a disciplinary inquiry.	
		❑ There has been significant progress in providing cohesion to the department through regular Department Executive Committee meetings chaired by the DG and Exco Meetings Chaired by the Minister. Internal governance structures generally have been strengthened. However, there is still room for more improvement.	
2. A less fragmented and fractious ICT Sector	2014 Elections	❑ The Minister engaged with relevant organisations and individuals on content issues and in mediating differences between stakeholders. The Minister met 243 organisations and individuals since 12 July 2013. The Deputy Minister has also engaged with numerous ICT related organisations, including through over 100 formal meetings since 12 July 2013. The Director-General had over 180 engagements with external stakeholders.	
		❑ The DoC Stakeholder engagement strategy is being reviewed in line with the aim of a less fragmented ICT Sector through pro-active stakeholder engagement. Stakeholder consultations including benchmarking with other government departments are underway and the revised DoC Stakeholder engagement strategy will be implemented in this FY.	

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		❑ While in some senses there is better cohesion in the ICT sector as a whole and fewer tensions, in respect of whether Set Top Boxes should have a Control system or not the tensions have increased.	
3. **Finalise Broadband Policy, Strategy and Plan to take through the Cabinet process**	30 Nov. 2013	❑ Cabinet approved "South Africa Connect", the National Broadband Policy, Strategy and high level Plan on 4 December 2013. ❑ It sets out the targets and the four-pronged strategy: digital readiness; digital development; digital future; and digital opportunity. ❑ A significant majority in the ICT sector has given positive feedback on "SA Connect". ❑ A SIP 15 Meeting was held on 24 April to ensure greater cooperation across the 3 spheres of government and the SOCs. USAASA has been engaged to align their broadband activities to South Africa Connect taking into consideration the ECA in order to avoid duplication of efforts and resources. These discussions are still continuing. ❑ Most of the Department's programmes and activities, even those envisaged before the adoption of "SA Connect" are being increasingly tweaked or restructured to fit into "SA Connect" and advance its goals. "SA Connect" has become like the Department's RDP. ❑ Since the adoption of "SA Connect", the Department has connected 788 schools to fast internet through cyber-labs, launched the iKamva e-Skills Institute and the National Broadband Advisory Council (NBAC). The NBAC comprises local and international technical experts, and representatives of business, trade unions and civil	

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		society to advise the Minister on the implementation of "SA Connect".	
		❑ The Department has developed a Broadband implementation framework which deals with the following which have been completed or are underway:	
		• An overall roadmap, stakeholder plan, technical plan, business case and procurement plan have been worked on.	
		• A Broadband governance structure has been established in consultation with government departments and state agencies. The Broadband Steering Committee (BSC) will provide consistent strategic oversight of the broadband implementation plan development process. The BSC will work closely with the NBAC.	
		• An Inter-Governmental Project Team on the rationalization of the state-owned companies has been initiated.	
		• Provinces and municipalities have been engaged on their provincial and municipal broadband plans with the aim of aligning them with SA Connect.	
		• User Requirements Specification (URS) for Schools, Health Facilities and Public facilities are being finalised in conjunction with the relevant departments. The URS will be used in the broadband network planning to specify current and future requirements by the various Departments.	
		• A process to align the broadband planning process to the budget cycle in a phased approach has been adopted to ensure that a detailed infrastructure gap analysis is conducted before requesting further funding from Treasury. The business case to request funding for Digital Development for 2015/16 will be submitted to National Treasury by end of July 2014.	
		• A detailed implementation plan for the Digital Development strategy has been developed. Due to the interdependencies between activities in the various prongs of the SA Connect strategy, work is underway on several projects to remove the bottlenecks. This includes the development of the Rapid Deployment Policy,	

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		spectrum policy directives on broadband spectrum and the wholesale open access network approach. There is also work being done to facilitate broadband demand stimulation to increase uptake and usage whilst addressing issues of research and development, innovation and entrepreneurship. This work seeks to ensure that broadband infrastructure is provided to areas where the users are trained to use broadband services and have the end-user devices to access the relevant broadband services. ❑ Following a request from a representative of the UN Broadband Commission for Digital Development, the Ministry forwarded a report on "SA Connect" for publication in the Commission's next report.	

4. Connect 788 schools as part of increasing focus on rural and other underserviced areas	30 March 2014	❑ 1650 schools have been connected by the DoC in the 2013/14 financial year
		  ▪ 788 schools have been connected since adoption of the broadband Policy in December 2013
		  ▪ 1218 of the 1650 schools received end user devices (20 laptops, printer, router and printer)
		  ▪ The Department has started a process to audit the connected schools and escalated issues to Telkom for resolution
		❑ A total of 8491 schools have been connected through government and industry initiatives within the last 5 years:
		  ▪ 6841 schools connected since 2009 by the ICT industry (Vodacom, MTN, Cell C, Sentech, Telkom, Neotel, WBS, USAASA, CSIR). 4900 of these schools benefited from e-rate.	

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5. **Develop an effective Spectrum Policy to facilitate the development of wireless technologies in support of universal access and economic development**	2014 Elections	❑ The Department has engaged with industry experts on Open Access Network (OAN) models to determine the best OAN approach that will address the country's needs, in particular coverage to under service areas. ❑ Engagements were held with ICASA on OAN principles and the digital dividend (spectrum released by broadcasters) to support the draft policy directions on broadband spectrum. Further consultation is still required before issuing the policy directive for public consultation. ❑ The Department published the Digital Dividend study report on 23 April 2014. ❑ The Department developed a draft Policy Directive on Spectrum for Broadband to facilitate universal broadband access and economic development. However, "SA Connect" requires a study to be done on OAN (Open Access Network). The draft Policy Directive needs to take this into account. The first phase of the study has been completed. The second phase will be completed by the end of September. The Spectrum Policy Directive will be issued in October. Further discussions with ICASA, the mobile operators and other stakeholders will be held shortly.	
6. **Finalise a new policy directive on Transparent Pricing Policy**	30 Sept. 2013	❑ The Department completed extensive research and collated relevant data. ❑ A draft Policy Directive on Transparent Pricing Policy was developed. ❑ It was not issued because of the challenges around the MTR Regulations issued by ICASA.	

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7. Convene a pricing workshop as part of a consultative process on the cost-to-communicate	30 Sept. 2013	❑ The DoC convened a pricing workshop with network operators and the relevant Government departments at a workshop on 26 September 2013, to explore the possibilities of reducing the cost to communicate, without undermining the independent role of ICASA.. ❑ Network operators proposed an industry forum where the Minister could engage the sector on pricing matters and the state of the ICT sector. Engagements will continue with Industry in this regard.	
8. Engage ICASA on the review of the Mobile Termination Rate (MTR)	30 Sept. 2013	❑ Engagements were held with ICASA. ❑ ICASA released the final regulations on mobile termination rates, gazetted on 4 February 2014, effective as of the 1 March 2014. However, MTN and Vodacom challenged the regulations in court. In line with the court ruling, ICASA will be finalising a cost modelling exercise for the MTR regulations within 6 months of the court decision. In the meanwhile, mobile operators have already reduced their retail call rates. ❑ Without intefering in ICASA's autonomy, the Department and ICASA have met several times to improve understanding of their respective priorities and programmes. Among the issues discussed were Transparent Pricing Framework, a Broadband Value Chain study, Mobile Termination Regulations, Premium Content Policy and Regulations. ❑ Although contested, the ICASA MTR regulations have already led to the increased competition in prices in the last few weeks and costs are showing a positive a downward trend.	

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9. **SENTECH to provide 84% of the country with network for the roll-out of the Digital Terrestrial Television**	2014 Elections	❑ The Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) network now covers 84% of the population. ❑ The remaining 16% of the population is covered by Sentech's satellite platform ❑ The digital transmission network, both terrestrial and satellite, is now in full operation on a non-commercial basis, pending the official launch of Digital Migration.	
10. **Convene a facilitation process to bring together the contending parties to reach agreement on the Set Top Box "Control issue"**	15 Sept. 2013	❑ The facilitation report was completed and submitted to the Department in October 2013. ❑ The amendments to the BDM Policy were gazetted on 6 December 2013, following Cabinet approval on 4 December 2013. ❑ Basically, the policy states that broadcasters are free to decide whether they want to use the control system or not. The STBs will, however, have a control system for a variety of reasons, including the need to protect our local electronics industry, create space for emerging entrepreneurs, avoid the delays that changing the SABS standard would require, minimise successful legal action and keep the doors open to broadcasters not wanting to use the control system now doing so in the future. Broadcasters using the system will have to pay for it. There are 12 criteria that were used to shape this approach. ❑ However, there is still an impasse with broadcasters and manufacturers not prepared to compromise. The incoming administtration will have to take a decision on this soon.	

COMMITMENT	DUE DATE	ACTUAL PROGRESS	STATUS
11. SAPO to build 50 new post offices as part of increasing focus on rural and other underserviced areas	2014 Elections	See table below	

Classification of Post Offices	Target	Completed	Under constru
New Postal Offices	20	4	6
Retail Postal Agencies	25	43	0
Mobile offices	5	0	0
TOTAL	**50**	**47**	**6**

SAPO has been unable to achieve its targets mainly because of financial constraints. The Department is engaging with SAPO and NT to address its financial challenges.

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12. Take forward the project on the National Address System	-	❑ In an effort to increase focus on underserved areas, the Department, together with South African Post Office, focused on increasing physical addresses to people, particularly in rural areas. ❑ Over 1 197 250 postal addresses have been delivered since August 2013, exceeding the target of 1 196 000. ❑ A Steering Committee composed of COGTA; Home Affairs; Social Development; SA Police Services; Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation; Statistics South Africa; and SAPO has been established to guide the process. ❑ A concept paper has been developed.	

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13. Provide clearer Shareholder Compacts and exercise more stringent oversight of the SOCs	2014 Elections	❑ The 2014/15 Shareholder Compacts of SOCs will be considered by the incoming administration by the end of May 2014. ❑ Seven Board members of .zaDNA have been recommended for appointment by the Department. The nominees will be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration by the incoming administration. There are still two board vacancies that have to be filled. ❑ Cabinet approved the appointment of 5 Sentech Board members. Two did not take up their appointments. These vacancies will be filled by the incoming administration. ❑ Four SAPO Board members have been appointed. ❑ The Position of the COO of SAPO has been filled. ❑ The SAPO strike has pointed to overall structural problems in SAPO that need to be addressed. The strike also had significant financial implications. ❑ SAPO's financial crisis is worsening. The Department is regularly engaging with SAPO and NT on this. ❑ An SIU investigation into SAPO is in progress ❑ The vacant position on the SABC Board has been filled. ❑ The position of the GCEO and CFO of the SABC have been advertised. ❑ The 4th quarter performance reports have been submitted by SOCs. ❑ Meetings to discuss quarterly reports are currently taking place.	

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		❑ Further discussion of Corporate/Strategic Plans for SOCs took place in April and May 2014. ❑ An SIU investigation into USAASA is progressing.	
14. Finalise the licence issues and the appointment of Board members to the Postbank	31 Jan. 2014	❑ A list of potential Postbank board designate members has been submitted to the Registrar of Banks for a "fit and proper" assessment. ❑ A Co-operation Agreement based on the Postbank Act has been approved by the SAPO Board. It requires SAPO and the Postbank to enter into an agreement on pertinent issues such as the sharing of infrastructure. ❑ A response on SAPO's application to SARB for authorization to establish a bank is expected soon. ❑ R481m has been allocated for Postbank Corporatisation for the 2013-2016 financial years – although this will not be sufficient. R205 million has already been received by Postbank . ❑ SAPO is in the process of implementing new IT infrastructure and new capabilities required for a bank. ❑ SAPO will apply for additional funds when a window for requesting funds opens in June/July 2014. Funds are needed for Bank Controlling Company requirements and for lending ❑	

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15. Finalise a National Integrated ICT Policy Green Paper	30 Nov. 2013	❑ Following Cabinet approval in December 2013, the National Integrated ICT Policy Green Paper was gazetted for public consultation. ❑ 74 wriitten submissions were received on the Green Paper. ❑ A National Consultative Conference on the Green Paper, attended by 536 people, was held on 3 March 2014. This was followed by provincial public hearings attended by a further 1705 people. ❑ The key issues that emerged in the public hearings included: • The cost of using cellphones is too high. • The post offices are important, particularly for people in the rural areas, but their services need to be expanded. • The importance of ICT for SMMEs needs to be emphasized. • People with disabilities have too limited access to ICT services. • The role of ICT in disaster management is not being recognised. • More needs to be done on e-literacy for communities and school learners. • There needs to be more education on the importance of broadband. • There should be zero rates for internet connection in schools. An Inter-Departmental Working Group workshop, which was extended to SALGA and the Government Information Technology Officers Committee (GITOC), was held in April 2014 to discuss the outcomes of the hearings. ❑ The Policy Review Panel is finalizing an "Options Towards a National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper" document for the Department to finalise a White Paper in the second half of this year. The White Paper will provide the framework for a review of the ICT legislation.	

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16. Establish a National ICT Forum together with government, the industry, trade unions and, individual experts from academic and government as well as civil society role-players	Late Nov. 2013 or early 2014	❑ The aim was to launch the National ICT Forum after the public hearings, with the President providing the keynote address. The public hearings finished at the end of March and it was too close to the elections to organise it. The Forum will be launched by the incoming administration soon.	
17. Finalise a new Community Broadcasting Support Policy	2014 Elections	❑ A draft Community Broadcasting Support Strategy has been developed and further consultations are taking place. ❑ Infrastructure has been provided for 5 Community Radio Stations: • Lentswe Community Radio – Parys (Free State) • Zebitiela Community Radio – Zebitiela (Limpopo) • Botlokwa Community Radio – Botlokwa (Limpopo) • Phalaborwa Community Radio –Namakgale (Limpopo) • Vaaltar FM – Taung (North West) ❑ Infrastructure for an additional 6 community radio stations will also be provided over the next 6 months to:	

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		• Thabazimbi Radio – Thabazimbi (Limpopo) • Shine FM – Richards Bay (KZN) • Maputaland Radio – Jozini (KZN) • Good news FM – eThekwini (KZN) • Radio KC – Cape Winelands District (Western Cape) • Valley FM – Cape Winelands District (Western Cape) ❑ The Department's focus on digital migration, broadband, ICT and other priorities meant there was not enough time to consult effectively on the Community Broadcasting Strategy. It will be published for public comment by the end of June.	
18. Process the 4 Bills before Parliament: ▪ **Electronic Communications Amendment Bill;** ▪ **ICASA Amendment Bill;** ▪ **South African Post Office Amendment Bill; and** ▪ **The Postbank Amendment Bill.**	2014 Elections	❑ All 4 Bills, the SAPO Amendment Bill, Post Bank Amendment Bill, ECA Amendment Bill and ICASA Amendment Bill have been finalised and have been signed by the President into law. ❑ Significant amendments of the EC Amendment Act include: ▪ Strengthening governance provisions for USAASA. ▪ Improving policy on the Radio management Frequency Spectrum (RFS), particularly increasing accountability and transparency in the management of Radio Frequency by ICASA. ❑ Significant amendments of the ICASA Amendment Act include: ▪ Improving compliance and enforcement sanctions and penalties. ▪ Added functions such as the Postal Market Regulations to ICASA's mandate. ▪ Clarification of ICASA's powers and functions in relation to the Competition Commission and other regulators.	

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		❑ The SAPO and the Postbank Amendment Acts focused on alignment with the Banks Act, as well as compliance with the clean break principle on the pension policy regarding spouses by the SAPO Pension Fund. ❑ The Department expressed its appreciation to the Portfolio Committee on Communications and the Select Committee on Labour and Public Enterprises for processing the Bills expeditiously.	
19. Finalise the merger of the e-Skills Institute (e-SI), the NEMISA and the Institute for Software and Satellite Applications (ISSA), to form an integrated institute for e-Skills	2014 Elections	❑ Strategic position of Ikamva National e-Skills Institute (iNeSI) to support SA Connect (Broadband Policy) and National Development Plan (NDP): ▪ The merger of the e-Skills Institute, the Institute for Satellite and Software Applications and NEMISA into an integrated e-Skills Institute is complete. iNeSI was launched on 21 February 2014, with the keynote address provided by the Minister of National Planning, Trevor Manuel. ❑ Towards an e-Readiness Programme and Fund: ▪ Discussions have been concluded with 12 key departments to finalise an audit of current approaches aimed at e-skills delivery. ▪ An MoU has been signed between the Institute and the Digital Opportunity Trust (IBM implementation agency) to deliver specific e-skills projects to the value of approx R6.5m. This includes the establishment of an e-Skills CoLab at the North West University, Mahikeng campus. ❑ Multi-stakeholder collaboration: ▪ e-Skills is now part of the UNDP Country Plan of Action. ▪ Formalised a relationship with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and participated in the Global ICT Human Development Forum at WSIS, Geneva ▪ Developed a Youth Programme in collaboration with Queensland University (Australia), IBM and Digital Opportunities Trust to elevate the opportunity for youth	

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		and ICT, especially aligned to SA Connect. ▪ 28 centres have been identified as smart community centres in collaboration with provincial and local stakeholders. ❑ Teaching and Learning: ▪ Implemented a national e-Skills curriculum and competency framework (NCCF) to guide continuous work at a provincial level ▪ Targeted e-skills courses were developed in line with the NCCF. 20 courses were developed across the national thematic areas. 3450 learners were involved.. ❑ Research and Innovation: ▪ 39 research projects were completed across five provinces. 13 PhD students, 50 journals/conference papers were finalized.. ▪ 44 mobile applications were initiated/developed.. ❑ Advocacy and Awareness: Developed a e-Skills Communication Strategy. The strategy guides the monthly newsletter and the advocacy and awareness campaigns the provinces. There are, however, funding challenges that iNeSI confronts, and these are being addressed.	
The International ICT Agenda		Although not part of the commitments made directly to the PCC, the following were among the issues attended to by the international division of the Department: ❑ SADC Communications Ministers met in Johannesburg in March to discuss postal services, mobile roaming, broadband and digital migration. South Africa chairs the Global Postal Strategy Committee of the Universal Postal Union and so hosted the meeting on Postal Strategy, which was followed by an Extraordinary Meeting of	

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		SADC Ministers. The meetings were also attended by the regulators and representatives of the postal sector and regional and international organisations, ❑ The Department hosted a National Broadband Policy Workshop with international experts from 15 countries, to get responses to the draft "SA Connect". Several of the comments made by international experts were incorporated into the final version of "SA Connect". ❑ The Department hosted the SA-EU Dialogue on the Information Society and ICTs which included SOCs and officials of the European Commission. The workshop dealt with the issues of Broadband, DTT, Spectrum Management, Research programmes, continued access to EU research funding, e-Skills, Cybersecurity, Internet Governance and the EU's development assistance programme. Agreement was reached on a number of possible outcomes for future cooperation. ❑ Funding was also acquired for an e-Skills project through the Project Steering Committee, which is chaired jointly by DIRCO and the European delegation.	
Tackling Corruption		The DoC has taken a firm stance against corruption, non-compliance with legislation and other forms of wrong-doing. 2 senior managers resigned following allegations of wrong-doing which did not involve abuse of the Department's resources. An SIU investigation into the Department's Media Corner Contract is in progress. Another senior official is facing a disciplinary inquiry. There are also SIU investigations into SAPO and USAASA. Legal opinion is being sought on further investigations into the conduct of other Department officials. The Department has been engaging with the SIU, SABC and other parties to follow-up on what action was taken following the SIU investigation into the SABC completed in 2012. These various attempts to tackle corruption are going to escalate the Department's legal costs.	

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		(OVERVIEW OF REASONS FOR FAILURE TO ACHIEVE TARGETS ❑ **DIGITAL MIGRATION:** Despite the compromises made in the amended policy referred to in section 10 above, we did not get the necessary cooperation of the broadcasters and manufacturers. The incoming adminstration will have to take this matter forward as soon as possible. ❑ **SPECTRUM POLICY:** Following extensive industry consultation, a decision was taken not to review the 2010 Spectrum Policy but instead issue relevant complementary Policy Directives in line with the Spectrum Policy. Since mobile broadband plays a significant role in extending broadband, it is essential to align the spectrum policy directives to "SA Connect". "SA Connect" requires a study be done to determine the feasibility and impact of open access on competition. There are different wireless OAN options with varying degrees of potential to achieve the objectives of "SA Connect". It is crucial that an appropriate option is adopted for South Africa to address the aspirations of the incumbents and new entrants and also to minimise unintended consequences. The first phase of the study has been completed and the second phase will begin at the end of June and be completed by the end of September. Further discussions are to be held with ICASA and the mobile operators and other relevant stakeholders shortly. ❑ **SAPO AND NEW POST OFFICES:** SAPO has been unable to achieve its targets for new post offices/points of presence mainly because of financial constraints. The Department is engaging with SAPO and NT to address its financial challenges. ❑ **POSTBANK CORPORATISATION:** The delay in the final appointment of Board members is partly dependent on the response from the registrar of Banks, which is not directly in the Department's control. ❑ **NATIONAL ICT FORUM:** The aim was to launch the National ICT Forum after the	

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		public hearings, with the President providing the keynote address. The public hearings finished at the end of March and it was too close to the elections to organise it. The Forum will be launched by the incoming.	
		CONCLUSION Of course, some of the targets are ongoing and cannot be fully achieved at a particular time – for example, "greater focus on rural and other underserviced areas" and "creating a less fargmented and fractious ICT sector". As pointed out earlier, the Department fully achieved or almost fully achieved 14 of the 19 (73,7%) of the commitments, while 5 commitments (26,3%) targets were not achieved. However significant progress was made on most of the targets not achieved. Exactly what progress was made as a whole is best assessed but considering all the activities set out in this document. It must be noted though that the 19 commitments were not individually weighted. Some of the commitments required far more resources and time based on their complexity and dependency on external stakeholders than others. There is a need for a more sophisticated and accurate assessment of progress on targets. The focus should in the months ahead be on achieving the targets not achieved. There also needs to be more focus on cybersecurity; youth and ICT; and women and ICT; and SMMEs and ICT. ❑ We feel that overall we have, under difficult circumstances, done reasonably well, but we could have done better, and we certainly need to.	