



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Attention: Mr Manyapelo Richard Makgotlho

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Dear Sir

SUBMISSION IN RELATION TO THE DRAFT RADIO FREQUENCY PLAN - REQUEST TO MAKE A FREQUENCY BAND AVAILABLE FOR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT IN THE UHF BAND FOR USE BY COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT WORKING GROUP UNDER INITIATIVE 5 OF OPERATION PHAKISA

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the submission is:

- 1.1 To provide background information on Initiative 5 of Operation Phakisa focused on Compliance and Enforcement and the communication challenges encountered during operations;
- 1.2 To request ICASA to include a frequency band available for Government Department in the UHF band in the Draft Radio Frequency Plan for use during Operation Phakisa joint operations and potentially other National joint operations.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 A decision was taken by Cabinet during December 2013 that required the development of a more integrated approach for Ocean Governance, including the development of management plans for the Oceans and Coastal Areas, Environmental variables, Conflict Scenarios and Trade-offs. As South Africa had been operating in terms of a Sector Based Ocean Management Approach, the aim was to move towards a more all-encompassing integrated and coordinated cross-sector management approach delivering Big Fast Results (Phakisa).

2.2 Through this process the Phakisa LABS were established. The coordination and management of the LABS was aimed at integrating governance structures in the South African Maritime/Ocean environment, identifying and managing the inter-dependencies of socio-economic aspirations and environmental integrity, and unlocking sustainable ocean economy opportunities and developments. The following LABS were established:

- (1) Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration,
- (2) Marine Transport and Manufacturing,
- (3) Aquaculture,
- (4) Marine Protection Services and Governance,**
- (5) Coastal Development and Tourism (this was done at a later date)
- (6) Small Craft Harbours (this was done at a later date).

2.3 The Marine Protection Services and Governance LAB focused on the need to improve monitoring, control and surveillance; the identification and protection of sensitive and unique marine habitats and species as well as the co-ordination of required resources for compliance, enforcement and policing of the oceans and coast. This was undertaken through the following ten initiatives:

- i. Ministerial Committee and Secretariat to Govern Activities
- ii. Enhancement of Legislation into the Integrated Coastal and Oceans Management Act or Oceans Act
- iii. Review of ocean-related legislation
- iv. Accelerated Capacity Building Intervention in Ocean Governance

v. Enhanced and Coordinated Compliance and Enforcement Programme (Initiative

5)

- vi. National Ocean and Coastal Information System and Extending Earth Observation Capacity
- vii. National Ocean and Coastal Water Quality Monitoring Programme
- viii. Creation of a Marine Protected Area Representative Network
- ix. Marine Protected Area / Marine Spatial Planning Discovery, Research & Monitoring Programme
- x. Marine Spatial Planning Process

2.3 Initiative 5 under Operation Phakisa has created the platform to provide opportunities for an integrated and coordinated approach in addressing these indiscriminate fishing practises as well as other illegal activities within the oceans and coastal environment by creating systems, processes and practices that allow detection of infringements (as well as prevention capabilities) followed by a co-ordinated and integrated response to deal with them.

2.4 The environment under which operations are conducted require a reliable and secure mode of communication, as activities vary from coastal foot patrols in bad coastal terrains to sea patrols covering the ocean space, even beyond South African Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ). A continuous and secure communication system is vital as any miscommunication or lack thereof may have significant implications (it could even result in loss of life, given that these operations are focused on enforcement and policing).

3. DISCUSSIONS

3.1 During the pilot phase operations of Initiative 5 (which took place across three coastal provinces) one of the most serious challenges that arose was related to communication between role-players involved in the operations. This was due to the lack of a generic portable two-way radio system to which all role players could have access. As mentioned above, the environment under which operations are conducted require a reliable and secure mode of communication, as activities varied from coastal foot patrols in bad coastal terrains to sea patrols covering the ocean space even beyond South African Economic

Exclusive Zone (EEZ). Cell phones were proven not to be suitable while operating in certain remote coastal areas as there will be very limited or no network in a number of these areas.

3.2 In order to address this challenge, continuous and secure communication is vital. The Compliance and Enforcement Working Group under Initiative 5 proposed that the possibility of a Radio Network for use specifically during Phakisa operations be investigated to enable all the role players to effectively communicate with each other during these operations. A number of engagements have taken place as part of this investigation and during the last Initiative 5 meeting in January 2017 ICASA indicated that a Draft National Frequency Plan had been published for comment and that it would be critical for Initiative 5 to request that a frequency band within the UHF band be made available for government departments for these types of operations and possibly other national joint operations which involve multiple government stakeholders.

4. SUBMISSION

4.1 It is requested that that ICASA include in the Draft National Frequency Plan a frequency band available for government department in the UHF band for use by Initiative 5 of Operation Phakisa as well as possibly other national joint operations taking place and involving multiple government stakeholders.

4.2 It is also requested that ICASA takes note of the importance of creating or availing the frequency band for Operation Phakisa which is a Presidential project that is coordinated through NATJOINTS in order to increase the effectiveness and full participation of all the relevant government departments and agencies.



MS FRANCES CRAIGIE

CHIEF DIRECTOR: ENFORCEMENT

CHAIRPERSON: COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT WORKING GROUP

INITIATIVE 5 OPERATION PHAKISA

DATE:

27/1/17