

MEDIA STATEMENT

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER RATIFICATION OF WRC-19 STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Parliament, Wednesday, 10 March 2021 – The Portfolio Committee on Communications has agreed in principle to a request from the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT) to consider and recommend that the National Assembly ratify nine strategic outcomes from the 2019 World Radio Conference (WRC-19).

These outcomes will impact on South Africa's national policies and radio frequency plan. They will be considered for ratification in accordance with Section 231 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

They are: mobile broadband, broadcasting-satellite service, maritime distress and safety system, earth exploration-satellite service, Wi-Fi networks, railway radiocommunication systems between trains and tracksides, intelligent transport systems, greater gender participation and empowerment of women and, increased number of women engineers and participation in spectrum management and planning.

According to the DCDT, the WRC-19 Radio Regulations came into force in January 2021. Once ratified by Parliament, the department will, among other things, update the National Radio-Frequency Plan as approved by the Minister in 2018.

Meanwhile, the committee is pleased with the work that is happening at the State Information and Technology Agency (Sita) under the management of the executive caretaker. The agency is currently undergoing a process of repurposing and realignment.

The committee Chairperson, Mr Boyce Maneli, said: "We appreciate the work done at Sita and we will continue to offer our support. However, we encourage the agency and department to ensure that transition between the executive caretaker to the Board that will be appointed should be managed carefully."

Mr Maneli tasked Sita to provide progress reports on a continuous basis on implementing repurposing initiatives and consequence management on irregularities raised by the Auditor-General.

ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS, MR BOYCE MANELI