

MEDIA STATEMENT

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE NOTES MINISTER'S COMMITMENT TO COMPLETE DIGITAL MIGRATION PROJECT BY MARCH 2022

Parliament, Wednesday, 17 February 2021 – The Portfolio Committee on Communications has noted with keen interest the commitment made on Tuesday by the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, Ms Stella Ndabeni Abrahams, to speed up the digital migration project, which will lead to a complete analogue switch-off in March 2022 in line with the President's announcement during the State of the Nation Address.

Minister Ndabeni-Abrahams briefed the committee that analogue switch-off will be implemented incrementally in provincial phases as milestones, starting with the Free State in March 2021.

The committee, however, held a view that it should be provided with a clear project timeline so that it can monitor progress and hold the department accountable.

The Chairperson of the committee, Mr Boyce Maneli, said that in light of the briefing, the committee will need to revise its programme in order to give priority to the digital migration project.

"Although we take note of the fact that the department is still awaiting finalisation by Cabinet on the project rapid response team as well as the governance structure, the committee will continue monitoring the project," said Mr Maneli.

The committee further encouraged the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa to use the meeting with the National Treasury to secure the retention of funds approved to roll out integrated digital television sets in order to make it possible for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to have access to online learning.

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