

# **SOUTH AFRICAN SCOUT ASSOCIATION**



## **Communication Policy**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

The South African Scout Association Transformation Strategic Plan sets out the communication strategy as a critical issue that needs to be addressed.

Responding to this critical issue, a National Consultative Workshop was held with professional and volunteer members of the Association and the purpose of the workshop was to develop a comprehensive communication strategy.

A situational analysis using the SWOT tools was applied to assess the challenges and opportunities of the Association. The four elements that were analysed in details were: content, agents, network and means.

This situational analysis revealed that in order to improve the communications in the Association a changed communications context should serve as the catalyst.

The objective of this document is to describe the ongoing communications strategy and to institute the principles.

The objectives and activities in the action plan address the areas of intervention.

## **2. TOWARDS A CHANGED COMMUNICATIONS CONTEXT**

A changed communications context should serve as the catalyst that will ensure more effective and efficient internal and external communications in the South African Scout Association.

SASA should create an environment

- Where every voice should be heard and have the means to be heard.
- That fosters decentralization of information, enhancing ownership in communications and seeks to empower people on the lowest level of SASA's structure.
- That will introduce shorter circuits, designed in accordance with needs and effectiveness rather than in accordance with hierarchical levels.
- Whereby more members have control over the flow of information comparatively to the few key people.
- That allows for a shift from a more highly centralized, vertical model to a more horizontal, people to people model.
- That will find the most effective tools to use the discipline of communication to make a greater contribution to the pace of development and change.

## **3. TOWARDS A BETTER PUBLIC AND CORPORATE IMAGE**

To work towards a better public and corporate image, vigorous research needs to be conducted in order to put strategies in place.

Focus areas for this research will be on:

- The evaluation of current perceptions and profile of the Association.
- Reviewing the Association's Corporate Identity.
- Putting in place systems that are concurrent with the defined principles of this policy.

#### **4. OVERALL AIM**

To ensure and strengthen the effective and efficient two-way communication with the internal and external stakeholders.

#### **5. PRINCIPLES**

The principles below are those which should apply to all aspects of the Association's communications whether for internal or external stakeholders

- Communications should be clear and concise, timely and consistent
- Effective: Creating an environment for interaction and participation and adopt cost effective techniques.
- Efficient: Processing information in reasonable timeframes and meeting deadlines.
  - Providing quality service

#### **6. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

Internal communication will serve to disseminate Scouting information among the members of the Association.

##### **6.1. Objectives**

- To ensure that internal stakeholders are well informed and well supported.
- To ensure the swift movement of information through all levels of the movement
- To ensure effective forums for internal stakeholders so that concerns and contributions can be noted.
- To identify and overcome the factors that impact negatively on the distribution of internal communications and material from National to Area level and from Area to group Level and vice versa.

##### **6.2. Internal Stakeholders**

The following can be identified as internal stakeholders:

- National, Area and District Management Committees
- Different funded projects
- Different sections of the Association
- Youth members
- Staff

#### **7. COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **7.1. Types of communication**

*There are two main types of communications. A lot of the communication takes place in an informal way. The policy recognises the importance of such interaction. However the document's focus is on formal communications.*

- Formally
  - Formal communications corresponds to the information conveyed via defined channels according to the structures and official procedures of the Association
  - Members communicate with each other in accordance with the hierarchical positions of members and in respect of the procedures as defined by the Association's Policies, Organisation and Rules.
- Informally
  - Informal communications corresponds to the information, which circulates outside the regulations of the formal structure.
  - Informal communication does not necessarily have to follow the formal structural flow.

## 7.2. *Communication Network*

Channels and direction of communication

- Top-Down Communications

To share; to direct; to inform; to communicate organizational goals and values; to integrate efforts

- Bottom –up communications

To express ideas and suggestions; to give advice; to seek concurrence; to express opinions; to state needs and concerns

- Horizontal

To communicate with peers both within the organizational units, across Groups, Districts, Areas and functional boundaries.

## 7.3. **Type of information that needs to be communicated**

- Programme details
- Financial information
- Policy
- Progress
- Events
- Information on training
- Management information

## 7.5. **Effective Methods of Communication**

The following means of communication are presently used effectively

- E-mail
- Meetings
- Telephone (followed by documents)
- Website
- Area and Group Notice boards
- Publications
- Conferences and Events
- Exhibitions

## **8. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

External communications is important as it displays the corporate image of Scouting.

### **8.1. Objectives**

- To strengthen and improve the external communications.

### **8.2. External Stakeholders**

The following can be classified as our external stakeholders

- General Public
- Funders
- Government
- Non-governmental organisations
- Media
- Youth

### **8.3. Effective Methods of communication**

The following means of communication are presently used effectively

- Letters to Funders
- Proposals
- Reports
- Faxes and e-mails
- Newsletter
- Website
- Television Advertisement and features
- Press clips

### **8.4. Type of information that needs to be communicated externally**

- Scouting activities
- Achievements
- Changes in Scouting and the organisation
- Advertising information

## **9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation plans will be developed and refined.

Indicators will be developed to measure:

- Members satisfaction with the availability of information regarding the Association's activities, policies and procedures
- Stakeholders (internal and external) perceptions of whether communication innovations have been effective.
- Stakeholders (internal and external) satisfaction with timing, content and format of information provided