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## COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

<b>Approved Date:</b>	<b>Effective Date:</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>

**Acronyms:**

HGDA	Harry Gwala Development Agency
COGTA	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
IDP	Integrated development plan
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MFMA	Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act No 56 of 2003
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
PMS	Performance management system
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
IGR	Intergovernmental Relations Framework

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1. The objective of this policy is to provide clear guide line for communications in the HDA and the principles that guide communications within the communications division. The different role and responsibilities of communications within the HGDA are clarified and, and policy indicates when information should be communicated and by whom. This policy will thus ensure that communication takes place in a coordinated and uniform way so that the HGDA speaks with one voice.

## **3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THIS DOCUMENT**

- 3.1. This Communication Policy seeks to ensure that the HGDA;
- 3.2. Shall acknowledge the importance of communications as a strategic management.
- 3.3. Shall demonstrate that the HGDA is committed to a transparent and effective relationship with its internal and external stakeholders and will do so by a process of consultation and information dissemination.
- 3.4. Shall communicate activities that are cost effective and procured within these guidelines and conform to the HGDA's procurement policies.
- 3.5. Office of the CEO has the responsibility to ensure that all communications activities, including procurement of services are done in accordance with these policies and procedures.

## **4. APPLICATION AND AUTHORITY**

- 4.1. This communication policy is applicable to all Officials and Board members of the HGDA.
- 4.2. Authority on communication issues vests with Chairperson of the Board as the Chief Communicator of the HGDA and also the CEO, who is the Accounting Officer and the Head of Administration.
- 4.3. Heads of Departments must ensure that there is a compliance with the communication policy in their respective departments.

4.4. Heads of Departments shall be ultimately responsible for the communication function of the HGDA, thereby ensuring better coordination and effective communication and that the HGDA speaks with one voice.

4.5. It is expected of all staff members to be loyal towards the HGDA and communications activities to be conducted in such a way to reflect commitment.

4.6. This policy is intended to ensure that the HGDA engages in a coordinated manner with regards to communications and communicates in a standardized way with unified messages. Adherence to the policy will result in a coherent image for the HGDA and government in general.

4.7. The communication policy falls within the scope of internal communications and it will be communicated accordingly.

4.8. This communication policy will be evaluated every year to determine that all aspects of it are still valid and forms part of the information that is provided to new staff members.

## **5. EVENTS MANAGEMENT**

5.1 Programmes and Projects Manager and Chief LED Officer as project managers are required to complete the communications projects template for all their projects, it should be relatively easy to keep track of impending events and to plan proactively. At the very least, the Office of the CEO must be advised at least six weeks in advance of any major event that is planned and must be involved right from the start in the planning process.

5.2 The relevant department should be responsible for the planning of events including the following: Advertising, Press statement, Media briefing, Mobilization of communities, Posters, Brochures/ Pamphlets, Speech, Invitations, Photography, Promotional material, Branding.

5.3 Chairperson of the Board, Portfolio committee head, CEO and managers delegated by CEO need to be in attendance and must ensure that the delegates are available to grace the occasions.

## **6. PUBLIC RELATIONS REGULATIONS**

6.1. HGDA shall undertake the facilitation of communication with the general public.

6.2. It is important to promote two-way communication and to obtain feedback so that the HGDA conveys relevant information that meets the needs of the communities.

6.3. Different means of communications are used to communicate with stakeholders.

6.3.1. Radio

6.3.2. Television

6.3.3. Newspapers

6.3.4. Magazines

6.3.5. Road shows

6.3.6. Exhibition

6.3.7. Workshop

6.3.8. Website

6.3.9 Facebook

6.3.10 Whatsapp Groups

6.4. All Public Relations activities must be recommended by the Heads of Departments and approved by the CEO.

6.5. Heads of Departments shall be responsible for the invitation of guests and stakeholders

6.6. Heads of Departments shall be responsible for reply and response from the stakeholders (RSVP) and the developing of the name tags for the Guests.

## **7. MEDIA RELATIONS**

7.1. The Office of the CEO is the HGDA's first line of contact with the media and is responsible for coordinating all media relations. The following procedures have to be followed with regards to media relations.

7.2. All media queries should be routed to the Heads of Departments and be responded to within two hours via the office of the CEO.

7.3. If the Heads of department cannot provide the necessary information within the prescribed two-hour period, they should advise the communications unit of same and provide time frames when the information will be available. On receipt of the information the Head of Communication will then draft the press statement in consultation with the Head of the department, which will then be submitted to the media.

7.4. All controversial media queries will immediately be brought to the attention of the Chairperson of the Board, Portfolio committee head and the CEO, who can opt to respond in consultation with the Head of the Department.

7.5. HGDA shall have the following people who are officially allowed to speak with the media on behalf of the Agency:

- Chairperson of the Board
- CEO
- Or any delegated person by the two above.

## **8. CRISIS COMMUNICATION**

8.1 A crisis communication plan is both necessary and a challenge on its own.

Without such a plan government can succumb in indecision when a crisis occurs. A crisis is a difficult period of actual or perceived damage to an institution, unit or individual, triggered by a sudden event or a rapidly developing problem. A crisis may affect safety or security, financial stability, reputation or the general ability to conduct business. All spheres of government should not be without a crisis communication

plan. Crises can be turned from disasters into opportunities to project corporate strengths.

8.2 The Board Chairperson, as a Chief Communicator and the CEO delegated by the Chairperson shall be the main spokesperson during the crisis.

8.3 Communications shall go in the form of press briefings, press releases, and telephonic interview.

8.4HGDA shall have on-going briefings until the crisis is managed and resolved, and avoid duplicated messages.

## **9. MASS COMMUNICATION REGULATIONS**

9.1 Heads of Departments shall undertake all duties related to mass communication through written correspondence or letter signed by the CEO.

9.2 When communicating with masses, the Heads of Departments shall utilize the following channels;

9.2.1 Notices on the paper

9.2.2 IDP and Budget Consultation Meetings

9.2.3 Board meetings.

## **10. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS**

10.1 Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998

10.2 Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000

10.3 Promotion of Access to information Act 2 of 2000

10.4 Local Government Communicators Handbook

10.5 National Development Plan vision 2030

## **11. INTERPRETATION OF THIS POLICY**

11.1 All words contained in this policy shall have a direct grammatical meaning unless the definition or context indicates otherwise.

11.2 The dispute on interpretation of this policy shall be declared in writing by any party concerned.

11.3 The Office of the CEO shall give a final interpretation of this policy in case of written dispute.

11.4 The party concerned if is not satisfied with the interpretation, a dispute may then be pursued with the South Local Government Bargaining Council.

## **12. POLICY ADOPTION**

14.1 This Policy needs to be considered and approved by the HGDA Board. Has been considered and approved by the HGDA Board.