

## Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber meeting – 12 May 2022

### Correctional Centres information

The PSA requested information pertaining to the approved bed spaces, lock-up, approved structures, and current headcount per centres to determine correct classification and the ratio between officials and offenders. A multilateral meeting is to be arranged for further discussion and feedback will be given in the next DBC meeting.

### Shift pattern

The employer reported that it has obtained a mandate to continue with further discussions on a new shift pattern. Parties agreed that consultation on the new, proposed shift pattern will take place in a special DBC for which the date will be confirmed by all parties.

### 3%-pay progression for 2021

Employees who qualified for 3%-pay progression for the 2020/21-financial year were only paid 1.5% when the salary increase was implemented. The employer, however, reported that DCS employees will only qualify for 3%-pay progression on 1 July 2022. Labour was requested to provide a list of members who believe they should have qualified for 3%-biennial pay progression on 1 July 2021. Affected members are directed to send their names to [velucia.maluleke@psa.co.za](mailto:velucia.maluleke@psa.co.za) by **27 May 2022** to facilitate further discussion.

### Social Media Policy

The employer presented the Social Media Policy to be consulted with labour (attached). Members are invited to submit their inputs to PSA Provincial Offices or full-time shop stewards by **27 May 2022**. Consultations will continue during the next DBC meeting.

### GPSSBC Resolution 2/2009: 3%-Biennial Pay Progression Provision

The employer tabled this matter and indicated that PSCBC Resolution 1/2021 amended certain aspects of GPSSBC Resolution 2/2009. The employer indicated that it will provide a draft agreement for consultation with labour. A special DBC will be arranged to further the consultation process.

## **GPSSBC Resolution 1/2021: Compensation for official duties performed during meal intervals**

The employer reported that there are some challenges pertaining to implementation of this collective agreement, which were picked up during training sessions and necessitate amendments. Subsequently, parties agreed that the employer will circulate the proposed amendments to be discussed in the next meeting.

Employees who want to join the PSA can visit the PSA's website ([www.psa.co.za](http://www.psa.co.za)), send an email to [ask@psa.co.za](mailto:ask@psa.co.za), or contact PSA Provincial Offices.

Members will be informed of developments.

GENERAL MANAGER



# DRAFT SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The digital era has brought with it new ways of connecting people throughout the globe and this phenomenon has brought about new communities that continue to relate despite not being able to meet face to face. The rapport amongst such individuals and communities has led to the bridging of gaps and sharing of resources amongst those who share similar challenges, hopes and dreams. Social media can help an organization engage with new audiences, increase brand awareness and customer satisfaction. However there is also plenty of risk involved when there are no policies or monitoring tools in place. A social media post done in negligence can quickly spiral into a full blown PR crisis or get an organization into legal trouble. In instances where an organization's social media activity is not guided and monitored through an official social media policy, it is most likely that the organization will always be faced with PR and reputational challenges. Therefore it is important for an organization to ensure that it engages in safe and consistent social media use through the application of a relevant social media policy. Such policies have been proven as an effective tactic in ensuring that all activity on departmental accounts is guided and consistent.

The application of a social media policy in the context of an organization should promote consistency of brand voice, tone and messaging across all platforms. Consistency in messaging promotes increased brand awareness and presents an organization as professional and decisive in terms of its governance.

This policy document aims to demonstrate the gains that could be made in favour of the department in the instance where a valid and relevant social media policy is adopted. These include improved transparency, participation and interaction with the public.

According to *statista.com*, Facebook recorded a total of 2.7 billion active users a month as of the second quarter of 2020 making it the biggest social network worldwide. Needless to say, the reach of such a platform is quite remarkable and that of other networks including WhatsApp, Twitter and YouTube.

It is worth mentioning that along with the exciting communication benefits that come with the use of social media, there is also associated risk that has to be managed adequately and therefore the importance of putting security protocols in place also forms a key part of a functional policy.

It is therefore incumbent upon the department to ensure that it puts in place and monitors a functional social media policy that would allow active participation of its members and stakeholders whilst regulating this activity in order to protect institutional reputation, legal woes and other crises. A key function of DCS in this regard is to ensure that the lines are not blurred between an employee's personal voice and that of the institution.

It cannot be overemphasised that the current era of enormous digital growth demands that government institutions should have social media presence in order to forge relationships with the communities they serve. Further to that the reach on social media is significant thus providing far greater communication opportunities as compared to the traditional forms of communication. In the ever revolving world of social media there will always be risks involved, however putting measures in place does mitigate the risk to a certain extent. Official social media pages can provide the department with control of its own narrative particularly in instances where incidents are reported prematurely and inaccurately. Setting the agenda is important for a department that is regarded as a key strategic player in what the state provides for its citizens.

## **2. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Social media is defined as all forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, news and ideas; publish content, share personal messages and other content such as videos, images, voice notes and other media. Social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, Google Plus and WhatsApp, Tumblr, Vimeo, Flickr etc. Below is a definition of terms used on this document.

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Call Centre</b>       | A centralized office used to receive and transmit information and enquiries             |
| <b>Customer Services</b> | Services provided by an organization to assist and advise the stakeholders it serves    |
| <b>DCS</b>               | Department of Correctional Services   |
| <b>DCS Official</b>      | An employee of the Department of Correctional Services                                  |
| <b>Employer</b>          | Department of Correctional Services   |
| <b>FBO</b>               | Faith Based Organization  |
| <b>GITO</b>              | Government Information Technology Office  |
| <b>GCIS</b>              | Government Communication and Information Systems  |
| <b>HRM</b>               | Human Resources Management  |
| <b>ICT</b>               | Information and Communication Technology  |
| <b>JCPS</b>              | Justice, Crime Prevention and Security  |
| <b>NGO</b>               | Non-Government Organization   |
| <b>Offender</b>          | A person incarcerated under the provisions of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 |
| <b>Stakeholder</b>       | A person or party that has interest and or is doing business with another organization  |
| <b>Webmaster</b>         | An official designated to manage and oversee the daily functioning of a website         |

### **3. BACKGROUND**

The phenomenal growth in digital technology and the rise of social media platforms over the past years has changed the manner in which the world communicates and shares information. The participation of DCS and its officials in this digital revolution has brought about the need to monitor and regulate the social media environment as it relates to the participation of both parties.

The department has experienced instances where either its officials or offenders have made headlines on social media platforms for all the wrong reasons.

Despite the reputational damage that such incidents may have caused, it has been challenging for the department to mete out fitting disciplinary action on its employees because of a lack of regulations in this area.

With the increasing growth in digital participation worldwide it is envisaged that similar incidents may be on the rise within the department and the most effective tactic to handle such would be through a social media policy.

The department can no longer afford to not participate on social media platforms which have grown tremendously in recent years and completely altered the face of communication as we know it. This participation is made even more urgent by the fact that today's world barely has time for traditional news and marketing channels including, radio, TV and newspapers and instead prefers to consume content on the go. The growth in various forms of social activism and political dissent which is often expressed through organized protests means that DCS has to urgently claim its place in the social media world too.

It is understandable that with the recent reputational knocks the DCS brand has had to endure in the past and even presently, the most natural response would be the urge to withdraw from media participation. However one of the best ways in which the department may recover its pride and dignity may be to stand up and be counted. What other way to register its presence and readiness to participate in social dialogue than through well regulated social media platforms.



Social media platforms would provide the benefits of instant communication and feedback alongside meaningful collaborations that social media promotes, not only with other government departments and structures, but with employees and various stakeholders as well. Key strategic partners of the department currently form part of huge communities created through social media platforms, and therefore taking advantage of this fact can only provide DCS with a leverage to reach huge numbers at a time thus enabling greater public engagement.

Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube account for the largest number of participants and there exists evidence to the fact that DCS officials and its political leadership are currently active on such sites. This reality serves as a spring board for the department to venture into an entirely different means of reaching its communities as opposed to the traditional means currently in use.

The fact that present participation of DCS officials on social media platforms is unregulated in relation to comments on official and governance matters poses a risk of DCS running into challenges that may have detrimental and irreversible outcomes on its reputation, credibility and public image, including its leaders. It therefore becomes the department's prerogative to ensure regulation and formalization of its participation in this area, including that of its employees and other key role players in an attempt to avoid major pitfalls that may currently seem unlikely, until they happen.

#### **4. POLICY MANDATE**

This policy is derived from guidelines, policies and frameworks that give direction in the establishment of social media within government departments.

- 4.1. Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998
- 4.2. Code of conduct for DCS officials
- 4.3. GPSSBC Resolution 1 of 2006 Disciplinary Code and Procedures for Levels 2-12
- 4.4. SMS Handbook Chapter 7 for level 13 and higher

- 4.5. Government Communications , 2018
- 4.6. GCIS Social Media Policy Guidelines, 2011
- 4.7. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- 4.8. Code of conduct for Public Servants
- 4.9. Corporate Identity and Branding Guidelines, 2005
- 4.10. Cyber Crimes and Cyber Security Bill 2017
- 4.11. Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 25 of 2002
- 4.12. Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000
- 4.13. The Copyright Act 98 of 1978
- 4.14. Public Service Act 103 of 1994
- 4.15. Protected Disclosures Act 26 of 2000
- 4.16. Protection from Harassment Act 17 of 2011

## **5. POLICY STATEMENT**

The department shall use the policy to provide proper governance of social media conduct amongst its officials and stakeholders whilst promoting a level of responsibility in social media use. The policy also seeks to outline best practice in the use of social media and how its members should conduct themselves when referencing the department on their personal social media accounts. Public servants may have the right to freedom of expression just like all citizens in the country, however they are further obligated to sustain, build and defend the reputation of government in their public conduct.

This policy will further afford DCS increased access to its audiences as well as the ability to adjust and redirect important communication quickly to where it is needed the most. Social media platforms increase the speed of citizen feedback and input and assist in reaching specific audiences for specific purposes. The measure of success for this policy will be the extent to which it allows the department to engage with its internal and external audiences by promoting communication, information dissemination, interaction and education. It is no

longer a question of whether government should use social media, but rather of how most productively it should use them.

## **6. POLICY OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1. The DCS social media pages will provide a platform for the department to share information on the services it provides to the public particularly in relation to its core mandate of safe incarceration, rehabilitation and social reintegration of offenders.
- 6.2. To create an interactive platform with the public and various stakeholders including but not limited to all government departments particularly those within the JCPS cluster, NGOs and FBOs that are currently doing work with the department, and DCS officials.
- 6.3. To project a professional image for the department by providing regulated social media platforms that will allow a two way interaction between the department and the communities it serves.
- 6.4. To reduce the department's dependency on traditional media channels which sometimes cause delays in the turnaround time when dealing with emergencies and other important matters in the media space.
- 6.5. To allow the department and its leadership to participate in social and government dialogues within a protected environment that will allow the advancement of its mandate.
- 6.6. To provide a platform for creating awareness on departmental programmes, achievements and milestones.
- 6.7. To act as reliable sources of information regarding all DCS matters and to ensure that the department speaks in one voice throughout all media platforms on each issue every time.
- 6.8. To provide a platform for communication, information dissemination, interaction, education and feedback between the department and the public.

## **7. POLICY PRINCIPLES**

### **7.1 OFFICIAL TOOLS**

- 7.1.1 Departmental officials dedicated to the running of all departmental social media pages will use departmental cell phones, routers, tablets and laptops to update content, upload files as well as monitor DCS social media pages.
- 7.1.2 Where such equipment is unavailable it will be procured in accordance with departmental policies and procedures on procurement.

### **7.2. PRINCIPLES RELATING TO DCS OFFICIALS**

- 7.2.1. The DCS Webmaster shall be the designated official to post and upload content on all official DCS social media pages.
- 7.2.2. The Webmaster shall be reachable on email i.e. [Webmaster@dcs.gov.za](mailto:Webmaster@dcs.gov.za) and shall be used by all DCS officials, branches, National Commissioner's office and the Ministry as the first point of contact for all posts and enquiries that relate to the department's social media activity.
- 7.2.3. Branches and officials that wish to update official activities and events on DCS social media pages shall forward such information via email to the Webmaster, who upon receipt of such will verify the information for authenticity and classify it before sending it for approval by the DC Communications.
- 7.2.4. Officials may not on their personal or official accounts make any statements on behalf of the department.
- 7.2.5. In cases of emergency or crises involving the department, all communication will be handled by the designated departmental spokesperson.
- 7.2.6. Officials shall not on their personal and official social media accounts publish any information that is considered confidential and not for public consumption on matters relating to the department, offenders and officials.
- 7.2.7. Officials shall not, on their personal and official accounts post and forward videos, images and voice notes relating to the department, offenders, officials or any other stakeholder regardless of whether these are already trending on other social media platforms.

- 7.2.8. Officials shall not on their personal or official accounts take liberty to answer questions, offer personal or legal opinion on departmental matters that may have generated social media attention at any point, but instead refer such queries to the departmental spokesperson.
- 7.2.9. Officials shall not on their personal or official accounts post commentary or content that defames, insults, threatens or attacks anyone; uses obscene language that is discriminatory against any particular race, gender, sexual preference, religion etc.
- 7.2.10. Officials shall not on their personal or official accounts post content that is of a pornographic nature, defamatory, libellous, harassing or that can create a hostile work environment.
- 7.2.11. Should an official, whilst using their personal social media account, encounter a situation that threatens to become antagonistic based on a departmental incident, official policies and procedures or any other official matter, they should disengage from the dialogue and refer the matter to the Webmaster.
- 7.2.12. Officials shall not, on their personal and official social media accounts post images or content that relates to governance matters within the department, including Acts, policies and procedures and offer personal opinion on such.
- 7.2.13. Officials shall not, on their personal and official accounts post content that interferes with governance and proper administration of the department or interfere with conditions necessary for working and serving of departmental clients and stakeholders.
- 7.2.14. Officials shall not use a government issued email address or cellphone number to register personal social media accounts. Personal accounts must use private email addresses and contact details.
- 7.2.15. Officials shall not use government related usernames or handles when setting up personal accounts e.g. DCS\_Joseph.
- 7.2.16. All content posted must reflect government values and be professional – whether on personal or official sites.

### **7.3. PRINCIPLES RELATING TO DCS**

- 7.3.1 Currently the department does not have any official social media pages that have been approved by either the National Commissioner or the Minister.
- 7.3.2 However a number of bogus accounts using the department's name and logo have cropped up in numbers over the years and have played a role in misleading the public which unfortunately did not know any better.
- 7.3.3 Due to the lack of an approved departmental social media policy, it has been challenging for the department to refute claims made on such sites in a sustainable way, as media statements released on the matter have a limited lifespan.
- 7.3.4 Once approved the DCS Social Media Policy will guide the department and its officials on how to use social media as a tool of communication with the public and various stakeholders including but not limited to all government departments particularly those within the JCPS cluster, NGOs and FBOs that are currently doing work with the department, Academic institutions and DCS officials.
- 7.3.5 A social media policy will allow DCS to defend its interest publicly as well as invalidate any misinformation that may come from any illegal social media site using its corporate identity.
- 7.3.6 As an employer DCS has a responsibility to educate its officials on responsible social media use both personally and professionally in order to avoid misinformation.
- 7.3.7 A social media team comprising of four officials from the Chief Directorate Communications shall manage and monitor the departmental social media pages on a daily basis.
- 7.3.8 The social media team shall consist of the Deputy Commissioner Communications, Director Marketing and Promotions, Departmental Spokesperson and the Webmaster.

- 7.3.9 All content uploaded on official social media platforms shall follow a specific chain of command for verification, classification and approval.
- 7.3.10 The department shall communicate messages that promote its image, protect its integrity and advance its service delivery intent.
- 7.3.11 Posts that are put on the social media pages must always protect the confidentiality of officials.
- 7.3.12 The department may remove public commentary that defames, insults, threatens or attacks anyone; uses obscene language that is discriminatory against any particular race, gender, sexual preference, religion etc.
- 7.3.13 The department shall monitor and evaluate its performance on social media platforms through daily trend analysis and weekly reports.
- 7.3.14 The department shall publish information that is relevant for public consumption in relation to its mandate of humane incarceration, effective rehabilitation and social integration.
- 7.3.15 Content and conversations shall be professional.
- 7.3.16 The department shall use simple and clear language when communicating on social media platforms.
- 7.3.17 The department shall prohibit content that contains sexual content, racial discrimination and promotion of individuals in the political space.

#### **7.4 PRINCIPLES RELATING TO INMATES**

- 7.4.1. None of the official social media sites shall publicize the face of an inmate without permission i.e. a signed consent form in terms of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998.
- 7.4.2. DCS does not allow offenders to own and have access to cellular phones and other digital instruments and to this end no offenders are expected to participate on any social media platforms.
- 7.4.3. Cell phones are regarded as contraband in correctional facilities and have to be removed in line with Section 26 (2) (a), of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998, the revised B-Order Chapter 14, paragraph 2 and the SOP for the Destruction of Confiscated Contrabands in DCS.

## **8. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

- 8.1. The Chief Directorate Communications shall take the lead in the implementation of the DCS Social Media Policy.
- 8.2. The Deputy Commissioner Communications has assigned a team of officials from the unit that will manage and monitor all official social media pages on a daily basis.
- 8.3. Currently the department does not have any official social media pages and that means the accounts can only be opened and named following the approval of the policy.
- 8.4. The team shall make all reasonable effort to ensure that the sites are named in accordance to the DCS branding and corporate identity so as to maintain brand identity across all channels
- 8.5. A designated official from the Branch Government Information Technology Office will set up the official social media accounts and ensure that all privacy measures are put in place before handing over to the communications team for daily running.
- 8.6. The branch is expected to ensure that all security protocols are followed to guard against hacking and other cyber risks. This also relates to issues of login credentials and the frequency at which they are changed as well as who has access to such.
- 8.7. This team will be involved in the daily running of these pages and is expected to have clear roles and responsibilities as seen below.
- 8.8. Daily posting of content and engagement with stakeholders will be done by the DCS Webmaster. Content generated by branches and various offices within the department, including the Ministry will be forwarded to the Webmaster's email address and upon receipt the information will be vetted for authenticity before it is forwarded for approval to the Deputy Commissioner Communications.
- 8.9. All content approval will be done by the Deputy Commissioner Communications before it can be uploaded on any of the departmental social media sites. Such content will only be received from the Webmaster who will be the primary custodian of these pages.



- 8.10. Crisis Response will be the responsibility of the Departmental Spokesperson. As an official voice within the department they will be able to engage further on crisis matters which usually cut across as public relations matters as well.
- 8.11. Daily Customer Services will be handled by the DCS Webmaster who will be working with the DCS Call Centre to ensure quick turnaround times. It is imperative to note that not all content that comes through the Webmaster's email will be uploaded on the social media pages, some queries will be handled and resolved privately.
- 8.12. Daily monitoring and trend analysis of the pages will be done by the Director Marketing and Promotions and this includes lifting of urgent matters that may lead to crises if left unattended. Trend analysis will form an important part of this area of responsibility in order to keep track of interest areas.

It is envisaged that before the policy's final approval by the Minister, consultations would have been done with various stakeholders within the department including labour unions, officials as well as the leadership of the department. The purpose of the consultation is to garner support and ownership of the policy, to provide an opportunity to articulate areas of concern and to empower and strengthen the knowledge of responsible social media use.

The consultations will be conducted by a team made up of HR, GITO and Communications personnel and it is expected that they be conducted in all regions and offices of the DCS. The COVID19 pandemic has changed the manner in which information is shared nowadays and therefore it is possible for some of these roadshows to be done on virtual platforms.

In order to ensure success of this policy DCS has an obligation to provide specific resources that will be needed by the communications team authorized to run these platforms. Initially DCS will be utilizing Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as its entry into the social media world. This notwithstanding the fact that the department may have to respond to information coming through from other platforms when the need arises.

## **9. POLICY MONITORING**

The Chief Directorate Communications shall take the lead in monitoring the implementation of the policy and this will be done through weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual reports.

## **10. POLICY EVALUATION**

DCS shall conduct an evaluation on the implementation of the policy to address factors such as efficiency, effectiveness and relevance. The evaluation shall be conducted on an annual basis and on instances where implementation challenges are confronted.

## **11. POLICY REVIEW**

Chief Directorate Communications shall be responsible for reviewing the policy annually in order to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practise; except in instances of major changes in legislation and audit queries that cannot be resolved. This includes decisions of the courts that warrant the department to review and amend the policy.

## **12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The policy shall go through legal services to ensure that it is in line with relevant applicable legislation.

## **13. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Availability of digital resources needed in the implementation of the policy is important and such resources include cell phones, tablets, data cards, laptops and cameras. The DC Communication shall provide access to training for the social media team which will be made up of the four officials authorized to specifically handle the DCS social media sites. It is envisaged that more communication officials, including those in regions and management areas will receive training as well.

Such capacitation will ensure the proper running of the departmental sites and will address key reputational concerns such as turn-around time on queries, confidentiality and content generation.

**RECOMMENDED/ NOT RECOMMENDED/ AMENDED**

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**SM THOBKGALE**

**ACTING NATIONAL COMMISSIONER**

**DATE:**

**SIGNED**

\_\_\_\_\_

**RONALD LAMOLA**

**MINISTER JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES (MP)**

**DATE:**