

OUR SABC

A review of South African broadcasting issues

*“In the midst of everything happening at the SABC, one will like to believe that it is still OUR SABC. It is important to acknowledge the importance of Public Service broadcasting in a newly born democracy. For a new democracy, public service broadcasting plays the most primary and profound role of creating a new identity and a united nation, through providing current and relevant programming, news and current Affairs”- Carol Netsbifbefhe
(Researcher: Media Monitoring Africa)*

What is on the table this week?

- The new SABC GCEO: who is she and why HER!
- Changing Faces: there is a new CFO at the SABC
- Operations at the SABC, who is going to be the next COO of the SABC?
- “Smoking the peace pipe”.... Mwasa and the SABC reconcile
- Finances, FINANCES, finances: Is the SABC ever going to be financially stable!
- The independent broadcasting regulatory review...is this not placing the ‘cart before the horse’?

The new SABC GCEO: who is she and why HER!

Finally!!! That was the reaction by many when Lulama Mokhobo was appointed as the 1st female Group Chief Executive Officer (GCEO) of the SABC. She was appointed by the [Minister of Communications](#) after being recommended by the SABC Board. She is the 11th GCEO of the SABC since 1994. According to the [Mail & Guardian](#), Mokhobo completed her Masters Degree in Science at the University of Utah in the United States of America. Like other GCEOs of the SABC, she joins the SABC when it desperately needs organizational leadership and financial stability. In an interview with [The New Age](#), Mokhobo assured South Africans that she would bring stability and transparency to the public broadcaster more especially with regard to filling key positions and would restore the credibility of the organisation.

Many welcomed Mokhobo; however, this was also accompanied by some scepticism. The question is what will she do differently so that she will succeed? The [SOS coalition](#) has lobbied hard for the key executive appointments to be made to bring stability to the SABC. SOS thus welcomed the appointment of the CEO. However SOS has been disturbed by the hands-on roll the Minister has played in this appointment.

Changing Faces: there is a new CFO at the SABC

It is crucial that a vast organisation such as the SABC has not only sufficient funding but also that there is sound financial management and sustainability of finances. [Communications Minister Dina Pule](#) announced on Wednesday (15 February 2012) the appointment of the new Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for the SABC, Ms Gugu Duda. Ms Duda a chartered accountant by profession brings a wealth of “skills, capabilities and experience required for the position” the communications ministry said in a statement. She would take up the five-year position on the 1st of March 2012.

Kate Skinner Coordinator of the SOS Coalition has welcomed the appointment of Ms Duda. [The Coalition](#) has long emphasized the need to appoint a new CFO and the need for a financial turnaround strategy as a matter of urgency to rescue the SABC from its parlous financial situation. However, Kate emphasised again the concerns of the coalition about the Minister’s hands-on involvement in appointments.

Operations at the SABC: Who is going to be the next COO of the SABC?

Something’s at the SABC are better than their soap operas, such as the procedures followed to appoint a new permanent COO. According to [media reports](#) the vacancy was advertised internally, applicants were given only three working days to apply and requirements regarding academic qualifications were apparently removed from the job advertisement. Speculators say all this was done to give the current acting COO lead way into the position! Hence the [credibility](#) of Hlaudi Motsoeneng has been making news a lot lately.

The [SOS Coalition](#) supported the [Minister’s](#) intervention to ensure that due process was followed. However SOS stated that it was a pity that the Minister had to intervene. The SABC Board and CEO should have done the right thing in the first place!

Let’s take the debate further, tell us what you think on this issue on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.

“Smoking the peace pipe”.... Mwasas and the SABC reconcile

The Media Workers Association of South Africa (Mwasas) and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) have mended relations. Following their second meeting at CCMA arbitration in Johannesburg, [Mwasas](#) a statement stating that both parties settled for an immediate cessation of hostilities following the stand-off triggered by disagreements around the Turnaround Strategy processes. These highly publicised collisions dating back to 2010 culminated in the termination with immediate effect of the MWASA collective agreement on 4 August 2011.

The parties will convene a meeting soon to take forward the process of reconstructing principled working relations.

Finances, FINANCES, finances: Is the SABC ever going to be financially stable!

Whether we like it or not, there is some truth in the saying “money makes the world go round”. Hence it is important that there is financial stability. It is worrying that every now and again there is some alleged wasteful expenditures at our cash stripped SABC. From: [golden handshakes](#) to [shuttle service’s scandal](#).

Kate says that it is important that the SABC strives for financial stability to ensure that it is efficient and effective. Kate also argued that the SABC funding model has to be revisited and new models explored however in the meantime the SABC operations must make sure they strive for financial stability within the organization.

The independent regulatory review...is this not placing the ‘cart before the horse’?

ICASA is undertaking a [Review](#) of The Analogue Broadcasting Regulatory Framework in preparation for Digital Migration. [SOS and R2K](#) have raised their concern about ICASA’s Broadcast Regulation Review taking place in a context of outdated policy and legislation. In response to these concerns ICASA called a meeting on the 3rd of February 2012 with the SOS Coalition to discuss in depth the purpose of the regulatory review. ICASA assured SOS that it would not finalise regulations before the actual policy review is done. ICASA explained that the regulatory review was a mechanism for ICASA to gather important information on the impact of their regulations to influence the direction that policy should take.

As part of the regulatory review a consultative conference will take place on the 20-21 February 2012. As a follow up to the issues discussed at the ICASA regulations review conference, the SOS and its partners will be hosting a seminar titled “Regulating broadcasting in the digital age” on the 27th of February 2012.

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