

21 May 2012

The Honourable Minister of Communications Ms Dina Pule
Ministry of Communications
IParioli Office Park
399 Duncan Street
Hatfield
Pretoria
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Copy sent via email to expedite delivery to:
Mr Thabo Rakgotho, Ministry Coordinator - ThaboR@doc.gov.za

Dear Honourable Minister Pule

Production and Content Advisory Board / South African Broadcast Production Advisory Body

The South African Screen Federation (SASFED), is an independent federation of independent and democratic television and audiovisual content industry organisations, constituted in 2006, and its current membership represents most aspects of the industry. The current member industry organisations are: Documentary Filmmakers' Association, Independent Producers' Organisation, Official South African Casting Association, Personal Managers' Association, South African Guild of Actors, South African Guild of Editors, Writers Guild of South Africa, and Women of the Sun.

As a federation focused on the development and production of local content in various forms and across a range of media, we read with interest the press release of 9 May 2012 announcing the creation of a Production and Content Advisory Board (copied below for ease of reference).

SASFED supports initiatives to support and grow local content. To make a meaningful contribution to the creation and work of the Production and Content Advisory Board, we would highly appreciate your assistance by clarification of the following:

1. Is the Production and Content Advisory Board (Advisory Board) to be established in terms of section 38 of the Broadcasting Act No 4 of 1999 (the Act), which refers to the establishment of a South African Broadcast Production Advisory Body (Advisory Body)?

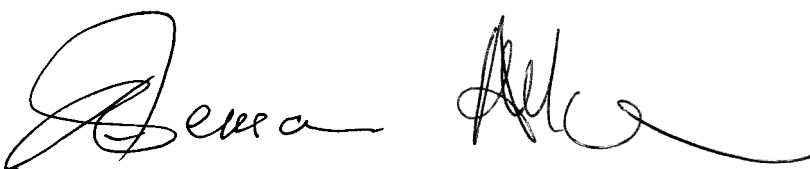
Full SASFED Member Organisations: DFA - The Documentary Filmmakers Association / IPO - The Independent Producers Organisation / OSCA SA - The Official South African Casting Association / PMA - The Personal Managers' Association / SAGA - South African Guild of Actors / SAGE - South African Guild of Editors / WGSA - Writers Guild of South Africa / WIF TSA - Women in Film and Television SA / WOS - Women of the Sun
SASFED is also formally affiliated to: FEPACI - Pan African Federation of Film - Makers / SOS: Supporting Public Broadcasting / TVIEC - Television Industry Emergency Coalition

2. Is the Advisory Board to have the duties of the Advisory Body as contained in section 38 (3) of the Act?
3. Is the process to be followed by the Advisory Board that of the Advisory Body as contained in section 38 (4) of the Act?
4. Is the terms of reference applicable to the Advisory Board the terms of reference as published in the Government Gazette No. 32932 of 5 February 2010; and if not, when will the terms of reference of the proposed Advisory Board be published in the Government Gazette?
5. Are the persons to serve on the Advisory Board to be appointed from those persons who responded to the request for nominations published on 5 February 2010 in terms of Government Notice No. 68 in the Government Gazette No. 32932; and if not, when will a fresh request be published?

SASFED is passionate about the local film, television and audiovisual industry, not only because of the stories we have to tell, but also because we believe that with quality local content, we can grow our industry to be a profitable and globally competitive one.

May we kindly request your response to this letter in writing within SEVEN DAYS to ensure we are informed, may in turn advise our constituency and write you again if necessary.

Yours truly,

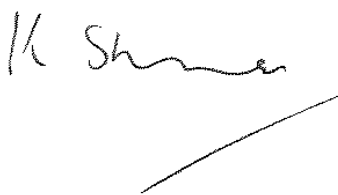


Ramadan Suleman and Akiedah Mohamed
SASFED Co-Chairpersons



This letter is supported by the SOS: Support Public Broadcasting Coalition, a membership-based coalition representing unions, NGOs, CBOs, community media, independent film and TV production sector organisations (including SASFED), academics, freedom of expression activists and concerned individuals.

The vision of the SOS Coalition is to create a public broadcasting system dedicated to the broadcasting of quality, diverse, citizen-orientated public programming committed to deepening South Africa's Constitution.



Signed by Kate Skinner, SOS Coordinator, on behalf of the SOS Working Group

SABC to get content advisory board

2012-05-09 17:07

The government is creating a Production and Content Advisory Board which will advise the SABC and South Africa's TV industry on the local content they should be producing.

South Africa's minister of communications, Dina Pule, told Parliament yesterday that she will be appointing a production and content advisory board soon as part of the SABC's digital terrestrial television migration process.

This board will advise the SABC - and South Africa's TV industry - about content.

Opposition concerns

Opposition parties voiced concern in Parliament that such a board will have to be free of political interference.

The SABC wants to expand from three TV channels to eventually 18 in total during South Africa's switch-over to digital broadcasting, a process known as digital migration.

The new channels will include 24-hour news channel to replace SABC News International (which was closed down) and a sports channel, SABC Sport.

Pule said she and the department of communications fully support the SABC's 24-hour news channel plans.

The SABC's new CEO, Lulama Mokhobo, told Parliament last week that the SABC plans to start test broadcasts of the new 24-hour news channel at the end of the year.

Temporary board?

The aim of the Production and Content Advisory Board is to help the SABC but also the broader South African TV industry with content development.

"First, it's not going to be full time. Two, it's going to be an Advisory Board which is going to advise the minister - not necessarily the SABC.

Thirdly, it is going to advise on content production and advise on strategies for content production in the digital television era," Pule told Parliament.

Eric Kholwane, the chairperson of Parliament's portfolio committee on communications, said chapter nine of the Broadcasting Act of 1999 says that the minister of communications must establish a South African Broadcasting Production Advisory Board which has to advise the minister on the development, production and display of local television and radio content.

"We urge the minister to do so," said Kholwane.