

## Dept strives for faster ICT delivery

Three months into her appointment as Communications Minister, Dina Pule has assured South Africans that her department will strive to deliver information and communication technology (ICT) services to the people on the ground.



(Image: GCIS)

Addressing a media briefing yesterday, Pule said while her department had built up considerable momentum, she wanted to increase the pace.

She outlined a number of areas her team had identified to help achieve this, key among them was providing connectivity to rural communities.

"We have identified 161 priority areas across the country and our aim is to bridge the rural/urban divide by 2020. We intend to establish 400 access centres, including community post offices and outlets, for rural people to access communication services," Pule said.

### **The benefits of a broadband infrastructure**

The creation of broadband infrastructure is also expected to increase economic activity and create jobs.

The minister emphasised that the SABC was high on her list of priorities, saying that South Africa needed well-functioning SABC that effectively carried out its public broadcasting mandate. "We have prioritised that all vacant executive positions be filled as a matter of urgency," she added.

Another priority was the filling of top management vacancies within the department. The focus will be on increasing technical skills in the fields of broadcasting, telecommunications and broadband, digital terrestrial television (DTT) and economic analysis and research.

With regards to broadband, Pule said her department, together with the ICT industry, had committed to delivering a 100% broadband penetration by 2020.

### **Postbank to be registered as a fully fledged bank**

The establishment and "corporatisation" of the Postbank as a public company was progressing well, she said. The process to appoint the Postbank Board is expected to be finalised by March.

The department was also working hard to ensure that Postbank was registered as a fully fledged bank that would provide affordable and accessible financial services and products to "unbanked and under-banked"

South Africans.

"As it was reported in the media, the Postbank has recently experienced fraud which is currently being investigated... I have seconded two executives from the DoC to work with the task team established... to investigate," she said.

On the issue of migration to digital broadcasting, Pule said DTT regulations were expected to be finalised the end of March.

SENTECH was also making significant progress in the roll-out of the DVB-T2 transmitters.

"We anticipate that by March 2012, the digital signal will cover more than 60% of the population. We have also decided that the DTT education and awareness campaign will be done in a phased manner until all provinces are covered," she said.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>