

SALGA PARLIAMENTARY LIAISON OFFICE
PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING UPDATE 15/ 2011 (03 JUNE 2011)

REPORT OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE MEETINGS: 31 MAY – 01 JUNE 2011			
DATE	NAME OF COMMITTEE & RELEVANT AGENDA ITEMS	SUMMARY OF DELIBERATIONS	PROPOSED ACTION FOR SALGA
31 MAY	<p>SELECT COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS (Briefing by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) on strategic plans)</p>	<p>In its opening remarks, DCoG noted the high voter turnout during the recent local government elections, calling for local government to ensure that participation of communities is not limited to elections - there should be an on-going active participation of citizens in municipal affairs.</p> <p>DCoG' s strategic plan focuses more on accelerating LGTAS. The department highlighted its commitment to provide support and exercise its oversight role over local government proactively – the department intends to develop mechanisms to strengthen its oversight role. The priority areas of the Department include: improving municipal financial and administrative capacity; strengthening municipal disaster management; improving access to basic services.</p> <p>When asked about its position on indigent persons, the department indicated that it intends on updated the indigent register; ensure that all municipalities have indigent policy; build on a system that zooms into a ward to identify indigents and also utilize traditional leaders in this regard.</p> <p>During the briefing, DCoGTA highlighted the following upcoming legislative action: Amendment of section 81 of Municipal Structures Act to give traditional leadership voting rights thereby enabling them to have meaningful participation at local level; Enactment of Traditional Affairs Act; and Amendment of Remuneration Services Act so that traditional leaders are remunerated accordingly.</p>	

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31 MAY	<p>PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON ENERGY (Briefing by the Department of Energy and SALGA on electricity distribution from a municipal perspective)</p> <p>SALGA was invited by the committee to participate. The ED: MIS, Mthobeli Kolisa represented SALGA</p>	<p>The Department highlighted challenges confronting the electricity distribution industry, namely: Unacceptable wide range of tariff differences; Significantly different service standards and practices; Lack of appropriate investment in network assets; Decrease in quality and reliability; Inadequate skills development within the industry. Another challenge relates to the Free Basic Electricity grant which some municipalities use for other services instead of the intending purpose. The Department indicated that a way forward would be to address the regulatory challenges affecting municipalities, including network rehabilitation and setting norms and standards for maintenance to monitor compliance and enforcement.</p> <p>The committee enquired about electricity theft and skills retention from EDI-H. The Department is waiting on the District Public Prosecutors Office to amend legislation relating to cable theft, so that its defined as sabotage and thereby provide for stricter penalties. SALGA indicated that Councillors assist in addressing cable theft by reporting it to <i>Khanyesa</i> Project. The Department indicated that 30 people from EDI-H will be retained but under a different employment contract.</p> <p>SALGA outlined amongst other things the current architecture of local government fiscal framework, whereby municipalities rely on local revenue - electricity distribution and property rates being the key source of revenue; large portion of electricity distribution accrues to Eskom, and local government is challenged by Eskom's refusal to sign SLAs with municipalities.</p> <p>SALGA also discussed the distribution price regulation. NERSA's approach to the high electricity costs in February 2010 was that Eskom should roll out Inclining Blocked Tariff (IBT) system to conventionally metered domestic customers. In SALGA's view this has short comings namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data used to develop the national tariff structure was not relevant to individual municipalities and did not adequately segment residential customers. • IBT structure removes fixed charges and this creates a revenue risk for 	

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		<p>municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The non-poor will benefit from the tariff structure. • Further the structure is based on REDS (Regional Electricity Distributors), rather than income distribution characteristics of consumers in groupings of comparable municipalities • The application of IBT will cause tariff increase of further 4.6% and will result in domestic revenue loss of about 25% for municipalities <p>Some of the priorities identified by SALGA for the electricity sector moving include researching alternatives to REDS; Up-scaling energy efficiency programmer and investment in alternative energy; and Intensify the fight against electricity theft.</p> <p>The Committee Chairperson emphasised that SALGA and NERSA should have a cordial relationship and NERSA should use this to strengthen interaction with municipalities. The Chairperson gave an indication that the briefing session might be followed by public hearings.</p>	
01 JUNE	<p>SELECT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE (Briefing by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) on progress of Siyenza Manje Programme) DCoG, National Treasury, FFC, SALGA and Chairpersons of Local Government Portfolio Committees of the</p>	<p>As Siyenza Manje Programme came to an end in March 2011, it was reported that the municipal Infrastructure support component of the programme will now be driven from DCoG through a newly established Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency. The Siyenza Manje Programme provided hands on capacity building to municipalities with high infrastructural backlogs, under-spending of MIG allocations, poor financial management and compliance with MFMA, including municipalities who are unable to recruit qualified officials in key positions. Focus areas of the Programme were outlined including achievements, challenges and lessons learned.</p> <p>SALGA highlighted the significance of skills transfer as the functioning of some municipalities will be affected when the employees from Siyenza Manje programme are pulled out. Treasury indicated that they will be reviewing all contracts of the experts deployed to municipalities in order to identify municipalities that still require these skills. FFC commented on issues of</p>	

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	Provincial Legislatures. SALGA was represented by the CEO: Xolile George and ED: Gov, IGR & IR – Johann Mettler	capacity and other challenges, and noted the lack of strategic direction from the national government in the Programme. In his closing remarks, the Committee Chairperson proposed that there should be an oversight action plan that has better co-ordination for the next phase. DCoG needs to recruit skilled people to deploy in municipalities and must re-evaluate the current skilled people.	

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA) RELEVANT COMMITTEE MEETINGS (JUNE 2011)

SECOND TERM 2011

TUESDAY, 7 JUNE 2011	WEDNESDAY, 8 JUNE 2011	THURSDAY, 9 JUNE 2011	FRIDAY, 10 JUNE 2011
			PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS , (National Assembly), [Briefing by National Treasury on the guidelines regulating advance payments to service providers; Briefing by Parliament

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA) RELEVANT COMMITTEE MEETINGS (JUNE 2011)

SECOND TERM 2011

			Constitutional and Legal Services Office on the findings and recommendations relating to the Rural Household Infrastructure Programme performance agreements; Consideration of the Rural Household Infrastructure Programme Performance Expenditure Report; Adoption of minutes], Venue to be confirmed, 09:30
TUESDAY, 14 JUNE 2011	WEDNESDAY, 15 JUNE 2011	THURSDAY, 16 JUNE 2011	FRIDAY, 17 JUNE 2011
<p>PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, (National Assembly), [Briefing by SALGA on: Changes to the Organised Local Government Act, Fulltime political leadership for SALGA], Committee Room 1, Upper Ground Floor, 90 Plein Street, 10:00</p> <p>PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TOURISM, (National Assembly), [Briefing by Banking Association South Africa</p>	<p>COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS AND SPECIAL PETITIONS, (National Assembly), [Deliberations on the Legislative Proposal to amend the Labour Relations Act, No 66 of 1995 (Ollis); Adoption of Reports and Minutes], Committee Room 3, Upper Ground Floor, 90 Plein Street, 08:00</p> <p>PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION, (National Assembly), [Briefing by Minister</p>		

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA) RELEVANT COMMITTEE MEETINGS (JUNE 2011)

SECOND TERM 2011

<p>(BASA) on support of the Financial Sector to Tourism Industry, especially on small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs)], Committee Room V119, First Floor, Old Assembly Wing, 10:00</p> <p>PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, (National Assembly), [Briefing by the Department of Energy on: Proposed Amendments to the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) Act, and the Independent Market Systems Operator Bill], Committee Room E539, Fifth Floor, National Assembly Wing, 09:00</p>	<p>of Public Service and Administration on the implementation of the Public Sector Integrity Management Framework across the public service and the successes of the National Anti-Corruption Unit to date], Committee Room 1, 120 Plein Street, 09:30</p>		
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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES (NCOP) RELEVANT COMMITTEE MEETINGS (JUNE 2011)

SECOND TERM 2011

TUESDAY, 7 JUNE 2011

WEDNESDAY, 8 JUNE 2011

THURSDAY, 9 JUNE 2011

FRIDAY, 10 JUNE 2011

SELECT COMMITTEE ON LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, (National Council of Provinces),
 [Briefing by the Department of Environmental Affairs on the Strategic Plan and Budget Vote,
 and the following issues: Progress in the Preparations for COP 17, Green Paper on Climate Change, Engagement with Provinces and Local Government to address Climate Change;
 Consideration and Adoption of Minutes],
 Committee Room E444, Fourth Floor, National Assembly Wing, 10:00

SELECT COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS, (National Council of Provinces), [Consideration and Adoption of Committee Minutes and Reports on: Budget Votes: Department of Public

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES (NCOP) RELEVANT COMMITTEE MEETINGS (JUNE 2011)

SECOND TERM 2011

Services and Administration, Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, and Workshop with Auditor-General on 2009/2010 Municipal Audit Outcomes], Committee Room V226, Second Floor, Old Assembly Building, 10:00			
TUESDAY, 14 JUNE 2011	WEDNESDAY, 15 JUNE 2011	THURSDAY, 16 JUNE 2011	FRIDAY, 17 JUNE 2011
SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICES , (National Council of Provinces), [Presentation of Strategic Plan by Public Works; Presentation of Report on Expanded Public Works Programme II], Committee Room E305, Third Floor, National Assembly Wing, 10:00			

JOINT SITTINGS AND OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

TYPE	DATE	CONTENT	SUGGESTED SALGA INTERVENTION
PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK FOR 2011	1 st term:18 Jan – 31 Mar 2 nd term:12 April – 1 July 3 rd term: 26 July – 23 Sep 4 th term:11 Oct – 9 Dec		

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JOINT SITTINGS AND OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

TYPE	DATE	CONTENT	SUGGESTED SALGA INTERVENTION
NCOP PLENARY	7 June	Policy Debate on Budget Vote No 29 - Energy	SALGA should participate and the MIS Directorate should prepare a speech – Cllr required
NCOP PLENARY	8 June	Policy debate on Budget Vote No 3 – Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs	SALGA should participate and the Gov, IGR & IR Directorate should prepare a speech – Cllr required
NCOP PLENARY	9 June	Policy debate on Budget Vote No 28 – Economic Development Policy Debate on Budget Vote No 37 - Transport	SALGA should participate and the MIS and Economic Dev & Planning Directorates should prepare speeches – Cllr required
MEETING OF PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON CoGTA	14 June	Briefing by SALGA on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the Organised Local Government Act; and • Full-time political leadership for SALGA 	This is part of SALGA Parliamentary Programme and Office of the CEO and Gov, IGR & IR Directorate should prepare a presentation
NCOP PLENARY	14 June	Policy debate on Budget Vote No 7 – Public Works	SALGA should participate and the Economic Dev & Planning Directorate should prepare the speech - Cllr required
NCOP PLENARY	17 June	Policy debate on Budget Vote No 31 – Human Settlements	SALGA should participate??
NCOP PLENARY	23 June	Policy debate on Budget Vote No 38 – Water Affairs	SALGA should attend and MIS Directorate should prepare a speech – Cllr required

APPROVED LOCAL TRIPS

COMMITTEE	DATE	DESTINATION	PURPOSE

MOST RELEVANT POLICY / LEGISLATION

NAME OF BILL & COMMITTEE	STATUS	SALGA INTERVENTION

CONTACT PERSONS	Nomawethu Xali / Janine Van Niekerk
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