



Department of Economic Development and Tourism

Umyango Wezokuthuthukiswa
Komnotho Nezokuvakasha

KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

ICT NEWS

1. BROADBAND

The national broadband project is well under way. This is led by the National Department of Communications(DOC). Great progress has been made with regard to taking our country forward in recent times by the Department of Communications who work with provinces to ensure that the country's broadband is synchronised and co-ordinated. The Department of Communications have recently completed the National Broadband Policy which is based on principles. During this year the National Broadband Strategy and National Broadband Implementation Plan will be completed.

The Department of Communications have also completed the draft ICT Integrated Policy Paper which is currently being reviewed.

Another of the Department of Communications recent achievement has been the establishment of the e-Skills Institute which has centres in most provinces. In Kwazulu-Natal the e-skills institute is housed at the Durban University of Technology and is led by Colin Thakur (Director). This institute has embarked upon skills development programmes for

citizens to become digitally literate and to achieve ICT enablement to improve service delivery.

In KZN there is approximately 12 000 kilometres of fibre optic cable that has been rolled by the State Owned Enterprises/Companies(SOE/SOC). There are 8 main district Points of Presence and 27 municipality points of presence that has been rolled out by the State entities. All state hospitals are connected to the internet. 34 health facilities have video conferencing facilities; 1553 schools have been internet connection. 129 public digital access centres have been rolled out through the combined effort of multiple government departments (DEDT, COGTA, Arts and Culture) and Usaasa.

As the country moves forward with its broadband initiative provinces will conduct its broadband initiative under the framework of the national broadband policy, national institutional arrangements and the national broadband strategy and implementation plan.

2. SMME Development

ICT incubators in Durban have been established and preparations are under way to establish ICT incubators in other primary node towns of PMB, Richards Bay, Port Shepstone and Newcastle. We congratulate SmartXchange for 10 years of existence. The national and provincial government provides assistance in the form of implementing agencies viz. SOEs, Usaasa, TIKZN, Dube Tradeport. Bothe spheres of government also provide assistance in the form of funding instruments viz. IDC,

DBSA, NEF, Ithala, SMME Fund, KZN Growth Fund, DTI Funds etc. Assistance is available at these funds. KZN Department of Economic Development and Tourism have recently established an SMME Agency that will assist smmes.

3. SOFTWARE

The province has established a Cloud Computing Facility at Dube Tradeport. It is pleasing to note that many local software development companies are working with this Cloud Facility to store their applications and provided services from this facility. It is pleasing to note that some software development companies have rallied around each other and are working collaboratively to produce software applications on all platforms that are of need.

4. DIGITAL MIGRATION

We await policy certainty in this area and are guided by it.

5. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

While national and provincial government have established special institutes for ICT skills development viz. e-Skills Institute and Moses

Kotane, the pipeline supply of ICT skills in KZN is a combination of these institutes, the universities such as UKZN , DUT, MUT, Unizul, FET colleges and other private institutions. In the last 5 years 6 000 students mainly from previously disadvantaged backgrounds have completed their ICT training from the Kotane Institute.

6. LOCAL ACHIEVEMENTS

We commend the following companies who have been achieving deals in foreign markets and excelling at a local level: Avnon Consulting, Astel, MIB, TDH, Chillisoft, Immedia, PilotFish, Dataworld, Uzibucko, Nitsak, Microvision, Aka Unique, Hashtag, EGGsBIT, Durban Motion Pictures, Smartvision , Adapt-IT, Lexus Nexus, Dynatech, Wanscan, IT Related, Home Grown, etc. There are a number of new and emerging companies that are quietly soliciting assistance from the aid provided through the various agencies and funds. We wish them well in future.

7. Innovation

The Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) provides assistance and innovation support.

The funding instruments of TIA are:

- Seed Fund
- Technology Development Fund
- SMME Patent Support Fund
- Youth Technology Innovation Fund