

WCG POLICY ON THE ADOBE READER E-SIGNATURE

Background and context

1. Owing to the magnitude and severity of the Covid-19 outbreak, a National State of Disaster was declared on 15 March 2020. On 27 March 2020, restrictions were introduced in accordance with a risk-adjusted strategy, commencing with a level 5 lockdown, which severely restricted attendance at the office.
2. The Provincial Treasury adopted an e-Signatures Protocol on 14 April 2020, which was adopted by other Departments in the WCG. The departments' protocols/policies provided for the use of the electronic signature contained in the Adobe Reader software. The e-signature enables documents to be signed electronically from anywhere and at any time.

Policy statement

3. The use of the Adobe Reader e-signature and enabling protocols is an example of a rapid, pragmatic response to the State of Disaster. It is one of the breakthrough innovations that changed the way we work for the better. It is important not to return to 'normal' after such advances have been made, but rather to provide for their ongoing use.
4. All departments have adopted the Adobe Reader e-signature; implementation over the last 18 months has proceeded smoothly; and the solution has greatly enhanced efficiency. PTM has approved that, in order to facilitate a common approach in the WCG, all departments must utilise the Adobe Reader.
5. Departments may deviate from this requirement and authorise a document by handwritten signature, on the understanding that the document will be a paper record and not an electronic record. Departmental policies may also require a handwritten signature for certain categories of documents.

Approval

DR HC MALILA
DIRECTOR-GENERAL