

Government Information Resource Centre at Parliament

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Correspondent

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) has as its vision helping to meet the communication and information needs of government and the people, and making government information readily accessible to all. To fulfil this vision government information resource centres have been established throughout South Africa.

Of particular relevance to the Western Cape is the GCIS Information Resource Centre (IRC) situated at Parliament - a one-stop facility offering government information to not only the variety of people who work in or visit Parliament but also to others who need value-added government information. These may include members of Parliament needing material for their constituency work; journalists; political researchers of Parliament, non-governmental organisations looking for crucial facts for their projects and members of the public searching for government information or official forms.

This information is sourced from the IRC's keeping of policies, speeches and other government documents provided by government departments and public entities. The departments and public entities, realising that the IRC is an effective disseminator of departmental

information, assist the Centre in keeping its resources current by the provision of their up-to-date relevant departmental information products.

In addition to hard copy material the IRC offers users electronic access to the Internet to get information directly from government on-line; to provincial government information centres (GICs) for provincial information; and to public information terminals (PITs) which provide direct services from government departments such as official government forms and information on tenders and tender processes.

An important element of this electronic access is the broadening of access to information about opportunities, which access is being made possible through the roll-out of the multi-purpose community centres (MPCCs) throughout the country. By the

end of 2004, the first generation of 65 MPCCs had been launched. The first generation strategy was aimed at establishing an MPCC in every district municipality of the country. The aim of the second generation roll-out is to establish an MPCC in every municipality by 2014.

The GCIS Information Resource Centre at Parliament would very much like to assist learners with retrieving government information. However, it is not always possible to help all the individual learners who approach the IRC for hard copies of government material as the IRC receives only a limited number. In order to avoid duplication and to ensure that all learners have access to material, the IRC requests educational institutions to provide it with advance notice of topics to be researched by learners about Government. GCIS will cooperate by providing institutions with master copies to form part of the institution's library's resources thus ensuring all students of equal access to the relevant information. It must be emphasised that information will only be supplied to the librarian, lecturer or educator.

Contact details

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More information

Web sites: www.gov.za; www.Parliament.gov.za; www.polity.org.za; www.pmg.org.za.

Search engines: For South African information: www.aardvark.org.za; www.ananzi.org.za; www.google.co.za.

Government telephone numbers can be accessed from the blue pages in the TELKOM directory. Please make appointments with the relevant departments before arrival.



Top: From the minute one steps into the Resource Centre you feel surrounded by light and space - an ideal place to get down to some serious research

Left: A work station for patrons. To the left is a glimpse of one of the many shelves on which information brochures are displayed. Seen here (standing) is Petra van Niekerk, information manager of the Centre

Right: Promotional material related to current campaigns are on display at the entrance



Other information resources

Topic	Name	Address	Tel	Web site / e-mail
National Government	Government Communication	Ground Floor, 120 Plein Street	(012) 314-2911 (021) 461-8145	www.info.gov.za
Parliament General	Parliament	Visitor Centre, 120 Plein Street	(021) 403-2911	www.Parliament.gov.za
Information material	Public Education Office	2 nd Floor, 90 Plein Street	(021) 403-3341/2248	<info@Parliament.gov.za>
Parliamentary documents Annual reports	Stores Public Relations	Old Assembly Building, Basement	(021) 403-2078/9 Fax: 461-5372	<plebeko@Parliament.gov.za>
Tickets Programmes	Public Relations Sections	Ground Floor, 90 Plein Street	(021) 403-2461/0 Fax: 461-5372	<mtsheoli@parliament.gov.za>
Tours of Parliament	Parliament	Ground Floor, 90 Plein Street	403-8618/2201/ 3683/2537/2266 Fax: 403-3817	<kgovender@Parliament.gov.za>
Government Gazettes Tenders	Government Printers	90 Plein Street, Basement	(021) 465-7531 Fax: 461-4404	See also DOCUMENTS on www.info.gov.za
Old legislation	National Library	Gardens	(021) 424-6320	www.nlsa.ac.za
Old documents	National Archives	Old Prison, Roeland Street	(021) 462-4050	www.national.archive.gov.za
Western Cape Government	Provincial Government	Wale Street	(021) 483-3911	www.capegateway.gov.za
Information material: Western Cape	Cape Gateway Walk-in Centre	142 Long Street	0860 142 142	<questions@capegateway.gov.za>
Municipalities Councils	Local government	Civic Centre	(021) 400-1111	www.capetown.gov.za
Government Information Centre	GCIS Regional Office	Ground Floor, Liberty Life Building, corner of Riebeeck / Lower Burg Streets	(021) 421-5070 Fax: 419-8846	www.gcis.gov.za



Friendly and helpful staff are at the ready to assist users. At her desk is intern Mandie Smit. To the left useful tourism information is also available

Multi-purpose community centres

Multi-purpose community centres (MPCCs) are one-stop centres where local, provincial and national government as well as other service providers offer much-needed service and information about government programmes to local communities. Each MPCC is unique and, located either in a single building or as part of a cluster of buildings, provides services according to the needs identified by communities living near the MPCC and surrounding areas.

These MPCCs have also been identified as vehicles through which development

communication activities can reach communities - this approach being wider than that of the MPCC. Development communication is an approach to communication which provides communities with information they can use in bettering their lives, and which aims at making public programmes and policies real, meaningful and sustainable - with the aim of making a difference in the quality of life of all communities. The main focus is on the previously disadvantaged and rural communities who have had little or no access to information previously.