GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Backbone: A backbone holds a network (or several networks) together. It is the main (or trunk) line in a network. All other networks and computers are attached to this backbone. In South Africa, the backbone for government departments is maintained by the State Information Technology Agency (SITA).

Department of Education: The Department of Education includes national and provincial offices.

Content: Resources for teaching and learning

Dial-up Internet access: Obtaining connectivity to the Internet by using a modem and standard telephone line to connect to an Internet service provider or other provider of Internet service. Maximum access speed is 56kbps.

e-School: An e-school is any GET or FET institution (including Early Childhood Development Centres and ABET Centres) who have:
- learners who utilise ICTs to enhance learning;
- qualified and competent leaders who use ICTs for planning, management and administration;
- qualified and competent teachers who use ICTs to enhance teaching and
- learning;
- access to ICT resources that support curriculum delivery; and
- connections to ICT infrastructure.

An e-schools connects with the community by:
- allowing community access to its computer facilities after hours;
- receiving support from the community and local SMMEs to maintain and sustain ICT interventions; and
- serving as a venue for business advisory services and training for community based small computer and repair businesses.

Firewall: A software process for preventing undesired access to a network or access device.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs): ICTs represent the union of information technology and communication technology. ICTs are the combination of hardware, software and means of communication that brings people together and that enable the processing, management and exchange of data, information and knowledge in order to expand the range of human capabilities.

ICT capability: The ability to use digital technology, communication tools and/or networks to access, manage, integrate, evaluate and create information in order to function in a knowledge society.

Information technology (IT): The electronic display, processing and storage of information, but not necessarily the transmission of the information. IT carries strong

historical associations with enterprise data processing and centralised computer services.

Inter-operability: The capability to provide useful and cost-effective interchange of electronic data among, for example, different signal formats, transmission media, applications, industries, or performance levels; ICT applications can talk to each other.

Network infrastructure: The physical plant of wires, switches, routers, hubs, satellites, broadcast towers, dishes and other hardware that allows communications signals to be delivered across networks.

Network security: Any effort made to protect a network from danger, risk of loss or unauthorised access; in other words, to make the network safe from intruders, errors and other threats.

Portal: A website that aggregates content and provides a methodology for accessing that content. It is a centrally-managed tool, a content and information-sharing platform, containing communications and collaboration applications for teachers and learners. It can serve as a nucleus for building web-based resources for teachers, learners and the community.

Scalability: The ability of a system - including both hardware and software - to handle larger loads when required.

South African learner in the general and further education and training bands: Any learner in South Africa that is enrolled in a GET or FET programme, including ABET learners and out-of-school youth.

Universal Service Agency: The Universal Service Agency (USA) was established under the Telecommunications Act 103 of 1996. It operates under the regulatory and policy framework enshrined in the Act as amended in the year 2001 and Ministerial Policy Directions issued in the same year. It seeks to promote the goals of:
(a) Universal services - a reliable connection to the communication network that enables any form of communication to and from any part of South Africa, and
(b) Universal access - the ability to use the communication network at a reasonable distance and affordable price, which provides relevant information and has the necessary capacity in under-serviced areas where over 60% of the South African population resides.

Virus protection software: Programmes that protect a computer or access device from being infected with software viruses that can destroy or alter data, applications and systems.