



UNIVERSITIES
SOUTH AFRICA

RURAL CAMPUSES CONNECTION PROJECT PHASE II (RCCP II) PROGRESS REPORT AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2017

1 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to indicate progress made with implementation of the Rural Campuses Connection Project Phase II (RCCP II).

The report covers progress as at 30 September 2017.

2 Background

The objective of the Rural Campuses Connection Project (RCCP) is to improve broadband connectivity of priority rural university campuses to the South African National Research Network (SANReN). It has been and continues to be funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

RCCP is managed by Universities South Africa (USAf) and implemented by the Tertiary Education and Research Network of South Africa (TENET).

The Phase I project (RCCP I) was funded by a R28 million grant and was implemented over the period October 2010 to March 2014. Following the successful conclusion of RCCP I, a proposal was accepted by DHET for further connections to be implemented. A grant of R71,127 million was approved for RCCP II for implementation over a four-year period from March 2015 to March 2019.

RCCP aims to improve infrastructure and learning environments in rural campuses facilitated through improved broadband connectivity to priority 'rural' campuses not yet connected to the South African National Research Network (SANReN) national backbone network. This comprises appropriate technology connections and related operational and maintenance support.

Campuses have generally been deemed to be rural if not located within any of the seven metropolitan areas served by the SANReN backbone ring (off the urban edge). Criteria were used to prioritise institutions and sites that were deemed to be rural; factors such as the relative importance of the campus for the institution, the degree to which the locality in which the campus is situated is served by telecommunications providers and the university's history.

RCCP II activities in the set-up phase over the period from March to December 2015 focused on the establishment and formalisation of the necessary agreements, structures, capabilities and macro plans required to successfully implement RCCP II. From January 2016, the focus shifted to detailed planning and implementation actions.

3 Overall timelines and progress

The overall timeline and progress on the RCCP II are summarised as follows:

Item	Date
RCCP II Grant Proposal to DHET	3 March 2015
Grant Approval by DHET	25 March 2015
Steering and Technical Committees established with agreed Terms of Reference	1 September 2015
RCCP II Project Charter setting out project objectives, governance arrangements and macro project plan approved by the Steering Committee	1 September 2015
RCCP II capacity development approach framework approved	12 November 2015
First individual connection achieved - MUT Main Campus (the only main campus not connected at the start of RCCP II)	22 January 2016
Agreement to extend operations and maintenance cost coverage for RCCP I sites to end 2016 to assist in the transition to beneficiary payment for these costs. Approval from DHET to use the RCCP I residual funds for RCCP II assisted in covering these costs.	8 February 2016
Comprehensive Request for Information followed by Request for Proposal processes launched for the first tranche of site connections (Phase 1, 2 & 3 - <u>37 sites</u>)	April to June 2016
Negotiation with beneficiary institutions regarding connections, operations and financial responsibility for operations costs started	June 2016
First purchase order on suppliers awarded for the Phase 1, 2 & 3 tranche	August 2016
Approach for a Phase 4 tranche of sites approved by the Steering Committee	18 November 2016
Agreement to extend operations and maintenance cost coverage for RCCP I sites to 31 March 2017 to cater for financial / budget uncertainty at institutions following government's decision that tuition fees could not be increased in 2016	18 November 2016
First connection of Phase 1, 2 & 3 tranche – UNISA Newcastle Campus	17 January 2017
Institutions recorded needs for a Phase 4 tranche of sites – 66 rural sites	24 February 2017
Request for information from providers for Phase 4 tranche of sites and review thereof completed	March 2017
RCCP I Sites operations and maintenance cost became responsibility of the beneficiary institutions	1 April 2017
Request for proposal for firm pricing for Phase 4 tranche of sites	April and May 2017
Steering Committee approval of expanded number of Phase 4 sites (74), service providers and costs	19 June 2017
Negotiation started with institutions regarding detailed designs for Phase 4 sites and operations & maintenance costs for these sites as from January 2019	July 2017
Steering Committee approval of final list of 56 sites for Phase 4 connection based on withdrawal of sites by institutions due to operations and maintenance budgets, reduced site priorities and self-connects in the period February to August 2017.	29 August 2017
Final connection of Phase 1, 2 & 3 tranche (31 sites were connected, 6 sites from the list were withdrawn by the institutions).	14 September 2017
Final connection agreements (project mandates) issued to beneficiary institutions for finalisation for the agreed 56 Phase 4 sites	29 September 2017

Item	Date
Service provider identified by USAf for a mid-term review of the RCCP II project (through a request for proposal process). The review is scheduled for October and November 2017.	29 September 2017

4 Key activities over the period January to September 2017

Key project activities (in chronological order) over the reporting period are set out as follows:

4.1.1 Phase 1, 2 & 3 sites

TENET continued with the management of the service providers and negotiations with beneficiary institutions regarding these connections.

4.1.2 Phase 4 sites

A decision was made by the Steering Committee in late 2016 to ask for fresh statement of site needs from the beneficiary institutions. This was based on: the time taken from the end of RCCP I and the launch of the RCCP II process; the changes that occur in this environment with self-connections, continued rollout of SANReN connections; and changing needs of the institutions.

The process to identify a comprehensive site list for consideration included:

- An on-line website was created to allow registration of needs onto the SANReN Database (November 2016);
- The IT directors were notified by TENET of the process and were requested to register needs (December 2016); and
- A communication was sent to all University Vice-Chancellors by USAf notifying them of the process and opportunity to submit potential site names (January 2017).

At the meeting of 10 April 2017, the RCCP II Steering Committee:

- Confirmed a RCCP II budget envelope for the Phase 4 sites of R30.4m based on the original grant less commitments and payments already made and including interest received on RCCP II funds up to end 2016;
- Agreed to interim cost estimates for the sites based on a request for information process; and
- Agreed to the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to finalise pricing.

A RFP process was launched and 14 suppliers were requested to submit proposals. Of these 10 complied and 321 proposals for 74 sites were considered. The result was a list of sites that could be accommodated in the available budget.

The consolidated list of 74 possible Phase 4 sites for consideration was determined as follows:

Requests registered on website by institutions	103
Sites for SANReN connections	-23
Self-connects that had occurred in the interim	-5
Sites not qualifying as rural / off the urban edge	-21
Health sites from RCCP II Grant Proposal	18
Sites carried forward from Phases 1, 2 & 3	2
	74

At the meeting of 19 June 2017, the RCCP II Steering Committee approved:

- 74 sites for the Phase 4 site connections;
- The RFP and associated evaluation process resulting in connection bandwidths and budgets for each of the 72 sites (total indicative cost of R26.9m). Two sites were agreed to be too expensive for consideration; and
- Approved the process to negotiate project mandates with the institutions and finalisation of purchase orders with providers.

At the meeting of 29 August 2017, the RCCP II Steering Committee approved a revised list of 56 sites for connection that was determined after final negotiations with beneficiary institutions. The reduction in sites came about due to self-connects implemented by the institutions, removal of sites by the institutions due to reduced priority and budget limitations at institutions (for the operations and maintenance costs from January 2019). The overall budget for this also reduced to R21.6m.

Included in this list are 18 WSU health sites, that through the RFI, RFP and negotiations process is costing significantly less (R5,3m) than anticipated in the original budget estimate in the RCCP II proposal (R23m).

4.1.3 Capacity development

In the reporting period various capacity development actions were undertaken as reflected in the table below:

Training event	Planning
Video Conferencing: Admins & Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ops & Admin (NATE) • Ops & Admin E Cape WSU & NMMU • NATE Conf 26th June • Admin and Institution TENANT admins Work in progress
SAFIRE	NATE Conf 26th June - Completed
Library IT General	Completed 1
Software Carpentry workshops	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCW Univen 	Completed 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCW Train the trainer 	Completed 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCW UL 	Completed 1
ASAUDIT Leadership training	ASAUDIT 4-8 Sept 2017

5 Priorities to 31 March 2019

The priorities to the project's conclusion are set out as follows:

- a) Finalisation of mandates and purchase orders for Phase 4 sites.
- b) Management of the Phase 4 site connection contracts.
- c) Consideration of a Phase 5 site list to fully utilise the available grant.
- d) Completion of the mid-term project review.
- e) Further capacity development actions as per the agreed plan.
- f) Ongoing communication with beneficiaries and stakeholders.
- g) Final evaluation and closure of the project.

6 Conclusion

Good progress is being made with implementation of this complex project. If successfully completed, and if beneficiary university campuses utilise the broadband connectivity provided by it appropriately, it will contribute to improving efficiencies in administration and communication as well as enhancing teaching and learning and research.

7 Annexures

7.1 Annexure 1: Sites withdrawn from the RCCP II list (as at 30 September 2017)

Several sites were removed from the potential connections list through the negotiations for and rollout of connections. These are listed in the table below:

Site	Institution	Comments
Ceres (Satvi)	UCT	Closed down
Robertson (Satvi)	UCT	Closed down
Mitchells Plain District Hospital	UCT	UCT no longer has a presence thus requested site to be removed from RCCP II
Nelspruit Campus	UNISA	UNISA not requesting the connection of the Nelspruit office via the RCCP II due to the existing connection contract
Mbizana Campus	UNISA	Due to the uncertainty of the long-term future of this office, UNISA is hesitant to spend money on a site that is earmarked to be closed or relocated to Port Shepstone
Cradle of Humankind	WITS	Wits requested removal of this site

7.2 Annexure 2: Connections progress for Phase 1, 2 and 3 sites

The following table summarises the progress on the 31 sites. All connections to the institutions have been completed. The remaining actions are for the action of the beneficiary institutions.

Site Description	Institution	Status	Actual Go Live	Comments
George Campus	CPUT		07-Sep-17	Complete
Worcester	CPUT		14-Sep-17	Installation Complete - CPUT to do their final testing
MUT Main Campus II	MUT		19-Dec-16	Complete
Saldanha Military Academy	SUN		30-Aug-17	Complete
Worcester Rural Clinical School	SUN		14-Sep-17	Installation Complete - awaiting trenching date to move termination point at institution site
George Municipal Hospital	UCT		07-Sep-17	Complete
Vredenburg Hospital	UCT		11-Aug-17	Installation Complete - UCT to supply equipment and do their final testing
Vredenburg House	UCT		11-Aug-17	
SATVI Clinic	UCT		11-Jul-17	Complete
Nelspruit Campus	UL		16-Aug-17	Complete
Diverse route (failover)	UMP		18-May-17	Complete
George Campus	UNISA		07-Sep-17	Complete
Vuwani Resource Centre	UNIVEN		22-May-17	Complete
UP Mamelodi	UP		18-May-17	Complete
UP Mamelodi (diverse connection)	UP		24-Aug-17	Complete
Agincourt Main	WITS		29-Aug-17	Complete
Agincourt Lab	WITS		29-Aug-17	Complete
Acornhoek: Wits Rural Facility Lodge	WITS		29-Aug-17	Complete

Site Description	Institution	Status	Actual Go Live	Comments
Acornhoek: Wits Rural Facility: Caravella	WITS		29-Aug-17	Complete
Acornhoek: Tinswalo Hospital	WITS		29-Aug-17	Complete
Pollen's Farm	WITS		24-Aug-17	Complete
Khayelitsha Clinic	UCT		20-Jun-17	Complete
Hanover Park Clinic	UCT		26-Apr-17	Complete
Lentegeur Psychiatric Hospitals	UCT		16-May-17	Complete
Mitchells Plain Community Health Clinic	UCT		16-May-17	Complete
Vanguard Community Health Clinic	UCT		26-Apr-17	Complete
Newcastle Campus	UNISA		17-Jan-17	Complete
Dentistry Faculty	UWC		05-Feb-17	Complete
Environmental Biotechnology RI	RU		08-Jun-17	Complete
UFH-Hunterstoun Research Centre	UFH		16-Aug-17	Complete
Uppington Campus	VUT		20-Feb-17	Complete

Legend:

Yellow	Beneficiary intuition action
Green	Connection completed
Red	Delayed (technical or commercial issue)

7.3 Annexure 3: Phase 4 sites

The 56 sites indicated below are included in the Phase 4 process following the activities reported in section 4.1.2 above:

No	Institution Name (in full)	Site Name
1	Mangosuthu University of Technology	MUT Main Campus (failover circuit)
2	North-West University	Bethlehem
3	North-West University	Bisho
4	North-West University	Bosbokrand
5	North-West University	Elim
6	North-West University	Empangeni
7	North-West University	Giyani Campus (NWU)
8	North-West University	Graskop
9	North-West University	Kimberley
10	North-West University	King Williams Town
11	North-West University	Klerksdorp
12	North-West University	Kuruman
13	North-West University	Ladysmith
14	North-West University	Lichtenburg
15	North-West University	Lusikisiki
16	North-West University	Matatiele
17	North-West University	Mkuze
18	North-West University	Mokopane
19	North-West University	Mthatha
20	North-West University	Okiep/Springbok
21	North-West University	Oudtshoorn
22	North-West University	Port Shepstone
23	North-West University	Queenstown
24	North-West University	Tzaneen
25	North-West University	Uppington
26	North-West University	Vryburg
27	North-West University	Vryheid

No	Institution Name (in full)	Site Name
28	North-West University	Welkom
29	North-West University	Witrivier
30	Unisa	Wild Coast
31	University of Cape Town	Mbekweni Clinic
32	University of Cape Town	Mitchell's Plain District Hospital
33	University of Cape Town	Oudtshoorn Municipal Hospital
34	University of Cape Town	Paarl Hospital
35	University of Cape Town	Phillipi
36	University of Cape Town	TC Newman Clinic
37	University of Kwa-Zulu Natal	Murchison Hospital
38	University of Kwa-Zulu Natal	Somkela (TSN 20)
39	Walter Sisulu University	All Saints Hospital
40	Walter Sisulu University	Baziya Clinic
41	Walter Sisulu University	Butterworth
42	Walter Sisulu University	Madwaleni
43	Walter Sisulu University	Dr Malizo Mpehle Memorial
44	Walter Sisulu University	Holy Cross
45	Walter Sisulu University	St Barnabas
46	Walter Sisulu University	St Elizabeth
47	Walter Sisulu University	Madzideni
48	Walter Sisulu University	Frontier Hospital
49	Walter Sisulu University	Mbekweni Community Health Centre
50	Walter Sisulu University	Mhlakulo Community Health Centre
51	Walter Sisulu University	Mqanduli Community Health Centre
52	Walter Sisulu University	Ngangelizwe Community Health Centre
53	Walter Sisulu University	Rietvlei Hospital
54	Walter Sisulu University	Settlers
55	Walter Sisulu University	St Patricks Hospital
56	Walter Sisulu University	Stanford Terrace Community Health Centre

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