

Last analogue switch-off in the NW Province

The last analogue transmitter in the North West (NW) Province has been switched off to make way for the continued implementation of the digital migration process.



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The Chairperson of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (Icasa), Dr Keabetswe Modimoeng joined the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, Khumbudzo Ntshavheni at the event that took place at the Zeerust transmitter site in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality on Wednesday, 22 December 2021.

“We are indeed grateful to be part of this important occasion and are in full support of government’s commitment towards the implementation and completion of the digital migration process,” says Modimoeng.

Phased approach to DTT

The Authority has since published the Final Radio Frequency Spectrum Assignment Plan (RFSAP) for the Frequency Band 470 to 694 MHz – providing a plan for the phased approach in implementing the analogue television switch-off into Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) through a Single Frequency Network (SFN).

The RFSAP in this frequency band expedites and fast tracks the implementation of the DTT, and the concurrent release of the first and second digital dividend spectrum for the deployment of International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT), to support the uptake of mobile broadband communications.

Communities urged to combat tower batteries theft

While the country prepares itself towards an improved television broadcast technology through DTT, Modimoeng also addressed issues relating to vandalism of the telecommunications infrastructure in the NW Province, where batteries are stolen from base stations - resulting in poor or no telecommunications network coverage in the province.

“While we are working hard to progress, our people are also taking us back through these unacceptable actions or behaviours.

“This is a serious matter that requires urgent attention because it hampers on Icasa's ability to fully implement its mandate and vision of building an inclusive digital society, where all South Africans have access to a wide range of communications services at affordable prices,” adds Modimoeng.

The vandalism of the infrastructure and theft of batteries has further resulted in telecommunications companies losing millions of rands in revenue while attempting to protect their infrastructure and keeping the signal or network available to consumers.

Modimoeng has urged all communities to stand up and protect this infrastructure by reporting all illegal or criminal activities to the law enforcement agencies for investigation and possible prosecution.

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