

Alan Knott-Craig steps down as Cell C's boss

Alan Knott-Craig has stepped down as Chief Executive of Cell C and is to become an executive board member of the company.



Alan Knott-Craig has stepped down as Cell C's Chief Executive. Image: Cell C.

He will be replaced by Jose Dos Santos, who has been Acting Chief Executive since November, after Knott-Craig suffered a stroke. There has been speculation that Knott-Craig was unlikely to return to Cell C following his illness.

Cell C Chairman Mohammed Hariri said Knott-Craig had made a remarkable recovery since the stroke and had officially been back at the company since Monday (5 May).

"In his new role, Alan would consult and advise on matters not only relating to Cell C but also concerning the Oger Telecom Group," said Hariri.

"I am very pleased that Alan has agreed to take up this new role, as his wealth of experience in the telecommunications industry is an invaluable asset for the group," said Hariri.

Knott-Craig joined Cell C in April 2012. A few months after his arrival he started a price war that saw Cell C introduce a 99c per minute rate to all networks. He was also vocal about the need to drop mobile termination rates to enable small operators like Cell C to grow. Those rates have since been reduced by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa to 20c per minute.

MTN and Vodacom have to pay smaller rivals Cell C and Telkom Mobile a termination rate of 44c, in what are described as asymmetric termination rates. The difference in rates is aimed at boosting the small companies' competitive advantage.

The drop by Cell C to 99c per minute resulted in MTN and Vodacom dropping their prepaid tariff to 79c a minute for a limited time. All eyes are now on Cell C to see if it will respond with a similar price cut.

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