

# Icasa reopens community radio & TV licence applications after poor first response

Given that only two out of 142 applicants successfully moved to the second phase of the community radio licensing process, and no applicants, out of 42, proceeded to the second licensing stage for community television broadcasting services, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (Icasa) will reopen applications for community radio and television broadcasting services.



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The invitation to pre-register (ITP-R) for both services will be published no later than 15 December 2021 and in April 2022, respectively.

## Failure to meet licensing requirements

In view of the high levels of non-compliance and failure to meet the licensing requirements, the Authority will be conducting a virtual workshop on 8 December 2021, from 10am to 3pm.

The workshop will determine what the challenges have been – over and above what Icasa has identified through the analysis of applications and related mitigation.

In addition, it will conduct country-wide public workshops in the new year, to fully unpack the requirements of the ITP-R to

assist communities to have a full understanding of the requirements as well as to address any other challenges that may be raised during these consultations.

The schedule of the country-wide public workshops will be communicated in due course, taking into consideration the Covid-19 pandemic and national state of disaster.

## **Encouraging communities**

While the Chairperson of Icasa, Dr Keabetswe Modimoeng, expressed his gratitude to all the communities that participated in and responded to previous ITP-Rs, he also encouraged these communities not to lose hope and faith in the process – as this is meant to empower communities and shape the future of broadcasting.

“We congratulate the successful registrants but also commit ourselves to starting the process afresh.

“This process needs to happen in a manner that does not set communities up for failure, and, as a result, we urge all interested communities to fully participate in the workshops and other related processes so that they can have a clearer picture of what we require to grant and issue licences,” says Modimoeng.

He encouraged communities to take the time to learn how the community broadcasting environment works and all regulations attached to the sector.

This, he says, is the basis within which they can be sustainable and successful and where any misdemeanour can be immediately reported.

## **Hijacked community radio stations**

“We have received endless reports of hijacked community radio stations in the provinces (which we fully condemn) – serving the interests of a few individuals.

“We therefore embarked on a successful process to review the applicable regulations and what remains of it is to ultimately award licences in a future-proof context and we urge communities to comply with the law and regulations,” states Modimoeng.

ICASA remains resolute and committed to ensuring the plurality of views within the broadcasting services sector and community radio and television remain an integral part of that.

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