

E-toll ad gets run off road

The SA National Roads Agency Limited (Sanral) has agreed to withdraw its boast that e-tolling could increase a company's profits by 20%.



Sanral has been ordered not to flight an ad suggesting a company will save money using toll roads. Image: [Sky Scraper City](#)

The claim, made in a radio advert aired on 5FM in September, irked two listeners so much that they complained to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).

The offending commercial involved a conversation between two men discussing tolls. In it, a driver tells his friend that paying e-tolls doesn't "worry" him.

"My toll fees buy me more customers," he says, maintaining that, by spending less time driving, thanks to tolled freeways, he can take on more customers and make 20% more a month.

The two listeners, in separate complaints, condemned this claim as being "completely without foundation". One of the complainants, Cape Town resident David Bowman, said there was no evidence to support the claim and the figure was pulled out of thin air.

The other complainant, who asked not to be named, said the advert was a symptom of a bigger problem - the road agency's dishonesty.

Sanral's figures

Following the complaints, Sanral agreed to withdraw the advert.

But Sanral told the ASA that the "20%" was based on a study by navigation device manufacturer TomTom.

Sanral said the study found that peak times have decreased in the post-Gauteng freeway improvement project period, and that trip times are shorter across the network.

"Applying the findings, single-trip local journeys in the Midrand, Sandton, Randburg area were now 15 minutes shorter - or half an hour shorter for return trips - than before the upgrading of the freeways," Sanral said.

The agency said a business that made four to five deliveries a day could now get in an extra trip, increasing its monthly turnover by between 20% and 25%.

The agency said this applied only to transport businesses.

Sanral spokesman Vusi Mona said the agency had no intention to mislead the public.

"We take note of all conditions of the law and will continue to comply with them. The campaign in question has ended and the advert will not be flighted in the future," he added.

Source: The Times via I-Net Bridge

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