

Right2Know Campaign calls on ICASA to end cellphone profiteering

Commenting on the revised model for determining mobile termination rates, the interconnect fees that cellphone providers charge each other to carry calls on their networks, released by ICASA this week, the Right2Know Campaign reiterates its call for free basic telecommunications services.



The revised ICASA model is in response to a court ruling in March 2014 that recognised that the cost of communication was too high but found ICASA's existing model for interconnect fees was invalid because it had not provided a clear rationale for how it set the fees. The court gave ICASA six months to produce a new model.

Since the court's ruling, MTN, Vodacom Telkom and Cell C have been engaged in an advertising war promising lower call rates. These new rates have largely been used as a marketing tactic to attract new customers and are not necessarily permanent.

Costs not directly related to interconnect fees

R2K has noted its concern that ICASA's modified model allows MTN, Vodacom, Cell C and Telkom to include costs that are not directly related to the interconnect fees, which will inflate the actual cost of communication and perpetuate profiteering through termination rates.

It is the right of everyone in South Africa to communicate. Access to affordable telephony and internet are vital for the health of our democracy. R2K rejects the profiteering of all phone companies at the cost of its people. The new interconnect fees must put an end to the phoney price wars and cut the cost to users meaningfully.