

# Agreement to help resolve telecommunications-related complaints

PRETORIA: The National Consumer Commission (NCC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) which will help in the resolution of telecommunication-related consumer complaints.



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"On 1 July 2015 the NCC and ICASA entered into a cooperative working agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), to establish a formal process of interaction amongst ourselves that will expedite the resolution of telecommunication-related consumer complaints," NCC commissioner, Ebrahim Mohamed said on Friday.

The commissioner said that the formal relationship between the two allows for complaints to be classified in terms of respective jurisdictions, which will make complaints handling and referral faster and more efficient.

"As such, the NCC will attend to matters relating to contracts, misrepresentation, bait marketing, faulty handsets, as well as call limits. This in turn means that ICASA will deal with matters of data, international roaming, pricing as well as the quality of networks and call services, among other things.

"Through this agreement we also wish to clear any confusion in as far as our respective legislations and mandates are concerned," said the commissioner. ICASA is responsible for regulating electronic communications, broadcasting, and postal services, and licensing of the aforementioned. The role of the NCC, on the other hand, is to establish national norms and standards relating to consumer protection, promote responsible consumer behaviour and to promote a consistent legislative and enforcement framework for consumer transactions, among other things.

"Through the memorandum, the two regulators will complement and strengthen each other's mandates, and further encourage optimal utilisation of the most effective remedies for consumers," said the commissioner.

ICASA acting chairperson, Rubben Mohlaloga said the collaboration between the two entities is aimed at establishing and formalising a relationship between ICASA and the NCC on matters of co-jurisdictions or common interest, particularly within the ICT sector. "The relationship further seeks to improve consumer complaints and referral processes, thereby facilitating a much quicker response to consumer complaints," said the acting chairman.

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