

# **PDMTTT postpones public hearings indefinitely**

The Print and Digital Media Transformation Task Team (PDMTTT) has announced that public hearings, which were to have been held on Thursday and Friday involving the major print media houses, have been postponed indefinitely. This is due to the decision by Times Media Group to pull out of the hearings.

TMG is the second company of the major four to do so, citing an on-going investigation by the Competition Commission into anti-competitive behaviour. The PDMTTT said however, that it would continue with the hearings on Wednesday and part of Thursday to hear other stakeholders including government, the ANC, SETAs, the SA Audience Research Foundation and advertisers. The hearings are to be held at the Johannesburg Theatre in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, starting at 0930.

The task team heard from these independent publishers and other stakeholders last month. The postponement to this week was as a result of the major publishers, after Caxton, a member of the top four, pulled out of the hearings citing the same Competition Commission investigation. TMG informed the Task team on Friday of its decision.

At an emergency meeting on Monday, the Task Team decided to go ahead with the hearings for the stakeholders but expressed its disquiet that two of the four major groups that tasked them to do the work have pulled out. The Task Team is to meet with the PDMSA leadership to express its views on the developments and to sketch the way forward.

The formation of the PDMTTT followed widespread complaints that the print media in SA was untransformed and that the major publishers inhibited new entrants through buyouts or smothering through pricing.

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