

# ICASA chair: SA not lagging behind on spectrum discussions

Speaking at a workshop hosted by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) to discuss its new spectrum fees with stakeholders, ICASA Chairman Stephen Mncube referred to the recently delayed process to assign capacity in high-demand bands.

During his recent trip to Geneva to meet with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Mybroadband.co.za reports, Mncube found that frequency spectrum issues were high on the ITU's agenda as well. "This is an indication that South Africa is not behind the rest of the world in its discussions around spectrum concerns," he said.

Speaking about the new spectrum fees ICASA will be charging from 1 April 2012, Mncube explained that this change in license fee structure was on the cards at ICASA since before even he came on board. His predecessors, he said, made an effort to understand the sociology of spectrum management and pricing. South Africa, Mncube reiterated, is a tale of two cities with "haves" and "have-nots." "Ours is to try and minimise that gap that exists in this industry."

Elsewhere, MyBroadband.co.za reported that ICASA postponed the licensing of high demand spectrum for broadband 'until further notice' after operators argue that ICASA's draft spectrum assignment plan was released prematurely. "This is to ensure that the Minister's policy direction on high demand spectrum is taken into consideration," ICASA said.

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