

Crackdown on illicit credit providers

In a joint two-day operation the South African Police Service, the National Credit Regulator (NCR), South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) have embarked on an operation aimed at clamping down on credit providers who are still employing illegal bullying tactics against vulnerable and unsuspecting consumers.

The operation dubbed "Project Blitzkrieg" primarily focused on illegal credit providers who are unlawfully retaining pension cards, bank cards, identity documents and personal identity numbers (PIN) of their clients as surety.

Pension payout points in Zwile, Kwa Zakhele and Motherwell in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape were focused on. Six people arrested were in possession of an accumulative number of over 60 pension cards, ID books and notebooks and 297 bank cards and pin numbers.

Operation to extend to other parts of SA

"This is certainly not the last of our operations in this regard," said Jan Augustyn of the NCR. "Such operations will later be extended to other parts of the country, mainly in rural communities where we believe people are more vulnerable and easily exploited. Meanwhile the NCR's education division will continue to educate consumers on their rights and obligations and provide advice on how to lodge complaints," he said.

SASSA has also advised consumers not to leave their pension cards with micro lenders as they will not get out of the debt cycle and will battle to get their grants if they do not have their pension cards. If consumers in and around the mentioned areas have left their cards and documents with micro lenders, they are advised to contact the Directorate Priority Crimes Investigations: Eastern Cape immediately where their cards can be retrieved.