

CRAN SERACH AND SEIZE OPERATION OF NON-TYPE APPROVED TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) from August 2021 to June 2022, conducted investigations on various telecommunications matters to ensure compliance and to determine any network interferences. After finalisation of the investigations, the findings highlighted network interference due to the use of non-type approved telecommunications equipment. Preliminary investigations found that the sale of non-type approved telecommunications equipment such as network boosters and decoders are on the increase in the Namibian market.

CRAN thus conducted a seize and confiscation operation, with assistance from Namibian Police Force (NamPol) for non-type approved telecommunications equipment at business retailers mainly in Windhoek as identified in preliminary investigations.

The search and seize operation at these business premises were led by CRAN Inspectors responsible for equipment certification, accompanied by NamPol to maintain law and order, and to ensure safety for all persons and business property during the operation. In total, 89 non-type approved telecommunications equipment found at the business premises were confiscated, and the owners or managers were given receipts for removal of evidence from the business premises in terms of Section 80 (9), 102 and 126 of the Communications Act (No. 8 of 2009).

All confiscated non-type approved telecommunication equipment will be stored at CRAN premises until such a time that owners produce type approval certificates for the devices. To this end, CRAN informs all importers, vendors, patent owners and equipment manufacturers of telecommunication equipment that it is their responsibility to obtain a type approval certificate before their goods enter the borders of the Republic of Namibia.

The Authority also warns the public that anyone found in contravention of the provisions of the Communications Act (No. 8 of 2009) are guilty of a punishable offence and will be prosecuted in accordance with the relevant sections of the Act.

Furthermore, Section 80 (9) of the Communications Act (No. 8 of 2009) outlines that the Authority may seize any telecommunications equipment that does not comply with any standard prescribed under this section of the Act or that belongs to a category of telecommunications equipment for which type approval is required as contemplated in subsection (3) and that has not been approved as contemplated in that subsection.

The purpose of type approval is to ensure that telecommunications equipment used in Namibia comply with international standards, and that sub-standard equipment which may present health and safety hazards to consumers, and that are incompatible with local networks are not operated in the country. Further, the Type Approval Regulations ensures that the general operating frequency of telecommunications equipment and in particular the radio apparatus are in conformance with the national frequency band plan of Namibia to avoid interference with essential services.

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