

CRAN LIFTS THE STAND-STILL PERIOD FOR THE APPLICATION OF BROADCASTING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE LICENCES

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The Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) imposed a stand-still period (commencing 01 October 2022) on the consideration of applications for Broadcasting and Telecommunications Service Licences. After various stakeholder consultations in 2021, CRAN was implored to conduct a market study for the Telecommunication and Broadcasting sectors. The aim of the research study was to determine the current market level of competition, market saturation, and any existing barriers to entry. It was appropriate that CRAN maintain a still market, in terms of market players, whilst conducting the study.

Therefore, CRAN as of October 2022 was not accepting applications for new broadcasting, and telecommunications licences. The stand-still period was imposed to enable CRAN to collect data from the market to assess whether the markets are saturated. The study was conducted based on a fixed data set, particularly the number of telecommunications and broadcasting service licensees currently in the market, and hence the stand-still period. The data collection has been completed and CRAN will resume consideration of new applications.

“The stand-still period for applications for Broadcasting and Telecommunications Licences will be lifted effective 01 October 2023. Thereafter, all applications for Licences in these categories shall be accepted and considered,” states Katrina Siken, Executive: Communication and Consumer Relations.

“CRAN did not and will not accept or consider new applications for Telecommunications and Broadcasting Service Licences between 01 October 2022 to 30 September 2023. CRAN only considered applications for the amendment, withdrawal, transfer, and cession of

existing telecommunications or broadcasting service licences when practically possible, and if such shall not result in a change of the data set," added Sikeni. Moreover, CRAN accepted and considered applications for Spectrum Licences from existing service Licensees and accepted Spectrum applications for bands that are service licence exempt. Hence from 01 October 2023, CRAN will now accept application for service licensees.

Sikeni states that it is paramount that CRAN continuously studies market dynamics to align the regulatory framework to best practices and emerging trends in regulation to ensure fair competition and facilitate investments into the sector.

"ENDS"

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