



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **TELECOM LESOTHO (TL) INQUIRY**

**2003-08-28**

Due to numerous complaints brought to the attention of the Authority either in person or over radio, the Authority carried-out an inquiry in June 2003 in order to better understand the situation. Our findings are as follows:

- 1) Over 5,000 people came to LTA during the month of June to submit application receipts for TL services. All of these people reported that they have never been connected with phone services despite having paid the required fees.
- 2) 3,111 of these applicants applied for service in July 2002.
- 3) Out of the total of the reported cases, 2,631 applicants reside in the district of Maseru. Thus, 52.5% of the total reported cases reside in the country's most affluent district.
- 4) In most cases, applicants reported that TL has never contacted them to explain the situation or even to offer reimbursements.
- 5) In some cases, telephone handsets were delivered to the homes of the applicants but not installed.
- 6) Other individuals reported that their names appear in the Telephone Directory yet they have never been provided with service. In fact, the numbers listed under their names have been allocated to other individuals or businesses.

Following the completion of this inquiry, TL was invited to make representations on the findings mentioned-above so that the Authority could make a decision.

The Authority has decided that Telecom Lesotho (TL) should do the following:

- Urgently contact people who have applied for service and make efforts to connect them. This process should start immediately and priority should be given to those who applied in July 2002.
- Submit an action plan, which will clearly indicate the timeframes by which people who have applied for service will be connected. This action plan should either be by location or district.
- Go to the radio for five consecutive days (at least one day should be a phoning program) to apologise and to explain to its customers the course of action to remedy this problem. TL will be on radio on Friday, August 29 2003.
- Submit to the Authority, a new procedure, which will now be used when people are applying for services by the end of August 2003.
- TL should collect money from customers only when there is an assurance that the infrastructure is in place and installations will be done within the expected time.

Finally, LTA will review Telecom Lesotho's connection practices in three months time to ensure that these requirements are being met.

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