



MINISTRY
COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES REPORTS ON USAASA

Immediate Release

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One of the portfolio entities under the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA), has been a subject of public interest recently. Particularly regarding its Executive Caretaker, Mr Basil Ford, and the manner in which he was appointed to this role.

This interest has arisen following the judgement by the High Court on the appointment of Administrators to public entities in the case involving PRASA.

We will not comment on this case at this stage as we understand this judgement to be on appeal and that, as a consequence, its legal effect is suspended.

We do however wish to inform the public, categorically, that Mr Ford was appointed by the department to serve as the Executive Caretaker of USAASA following an appropriate recruitment process by the Department, in accordance with all due processes of the Department and with the concurrence of the Cabinet.

Mr Ford was appointed to this role due to, amongst other consideration, his lengthy experience and record on the management of Funds, having previously served in a senior capacity at the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC).

In the past there has also been speculative reports by some publications seeking to link the Minister's family members to procurement matters at USAASA. We repeat that USAASA has categorically confirmed that they are not aware of any such involvement. As the Minister has asked the public before, anyone with evidence of such wrongdoing should immediately report this to Law Enforcement Officers.

The Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa. USAASA is an organ of state whose functions include the promotion of universal access to electronic communications network and broadcasting services as provided for in section 82 of the Electronic Communications Act. This entity reports to Ministry of Communications and Digital Technologies. Minister has recently announced that the restructuring of USAASA and USAF to reposition it as a digital development challenge fund is underway.

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