



NCC to Stop Stolen Handsets on GSM Networks

By Efem Nkanga, 02.02.2007

As subscribers to the GSM networks continue to contend with the menace of stolen handsets on a daily basis, the Nigerian Communications Commission has promised to put in place policies that will ensure that stolen handsets are no longer viable on the GSM networks.

The Executive Commissioner, Engineering and Standards, of the NCC, Engr. Steve Bello, disclosed this at the Telecom Consumer Parliament held in Kano recently.

Engr. Bello responding to a question on handsets theft advised consumers to henceforth take note of three unique numbers on their GSM handsets which are very important. They are IMSI number, the equipment number and the serial number. He reiterated that these three numbers would enable the service providers in the country to make it impossible for a handset to be used on the network if it is reported stolen.

Also responding to complaints that NITEL customers in Kano find it difficult to get connected to certain parts of the country due to the broken down NITEL trunk linking Kano with Abuja, Engr. Bello responded that the Commission was going to take up the matter with the management of NITEL promptly. He however noted that consumers should realize that there are also service providers who offer alternative trunk links on the same route.

The Chairman of the event, Executive Commissioner, Licensing and Consumer Affairs, Dr. Bashir Gwandu in an earlier response to a complaint had pointed out that the Commission consistently increases competition in the telecommunications industry in order to drive down prices in the market. He added that the recent award of a mobile licence and spectrum in the GSM 1800 and 900 MHz bands to Mubadala Development Company was a good example.

On the enquiry on how the NCC spends its income, Dr. Gwandu observed that the Commission publishes its annual accounts detailing its revenue and expenditure as required by law. Dr. Gwandu also remarked that as part of efforts to boost the growth of the telecommunications industry the Commission reduced the cost of the licence for Sales and Installation of Terminal Equipment to N10, 000 from N250, 000 by December 2006.