

Installers next in line for set-top box tender

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Another tender related to set-top boxes is expected to be finalised soon. The Universal Service and Access Agency of SA (Usaasa) is expected to select companies to install the set-top boxes and aerials in 5-million households.



The agency, which is managing the multibillion-rand tender, for the manufacturing of the boxes and TV aerials, received bids from 149 companies, including JSE-listed Ellies. Companies bidding for the installation tender that will also get a slice of the set-top boxes manufacturing tender include Meso Systems, Maredi Telecoms and Lamec, which belongs to the National Association of Manufacturers in Electronic Components.

The boxes will be needed to receive digital signals when SA migrates to digital broadcasting. It is expected that the programme will be completed by June next year following long delays.

The state will give set-top boxes to 5-million of the poorest households for free.

In April, Usaasa appointed all 25 bidders for the supply and manufacturing of the boxes.

Usaasa CEO Zami Nkosi said yesterday that the agency would make its selection this month for the installation tender. It would ensure that winning companies had enough capacity for quick installations.

The agency and the Department of Communications will again meet this week to discuss the set-top box manufacturing process.

Usaasa is yet to disclose the allocations among the 25 successful bidders for the manufacturing tender. That is likely to be contentious as it is a one-off tender.

Source: Business Day

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