

# Muthambi stands ground on digital migration

By [Gareth van Zyl](#)

13 Oct 2015

Minister of Communications Faith Muthambi has denied reports that the ruling ANC has discussed a reversal of South Africa's digital migration policy.

The *Business Day* reported on Monday that the ANC, at its National General Council (NGC) meeting on the weekend, criticised Muthambi for allegedly defying party policy on digital migration.

Earlier this year, Muthambi's department made amendments to South Africa's digital broadcasting policy to ensure that up to five million subsidised set-top boxes do not require encryption technology.

"The Department of Communications wishes to place it on record that the ANC NGC never discussed a possible reversal of the Broadcasting Digital Migration Policy as reported in the *Business Day* and *Business Report* on Monday, October 12 2015," said Muthambi in a statement.



Image via [123RF](#)

"The matter of encryption was also not discussed in the Commission and Plenary Sessions of the National General Council when the report of the Commission was adopted," Muthambi added.

She further said that "instead it was unanimously agreed that the Broadcasting Digital Migration Policy should be

implemented without delay" and that the "policy went through the proper process as prescribed by cabinet" with requests for public comments dating back to 2013.

Muthambi's stance on encryption is similar to that of the SABC and MultiChoice - two organisations that have said encryption would add extra costs to manufacturing set-top boxes.

Conversely, broadcaster e.tv and official opposition party the Democratic Alliance (DA) have said that encryption would ensure that non-compliant boxes would not receive signals and that it could further protect high quality content for free-to-air broadcasters.

The ANC told Fin24 on Monday that it planned to have a meeting with Muthambi on her decisions regarding digital migration.

"The meeting is urgent," the ANC's communications sub-committee chair Jackson Mthembu told Fin24 by phone on Monday.

"Yes, we are going to meet with her so that we get exactly what the intentions are and whether we'll be able to achieve what we wanted to achieve as the ANC and for the people of South Africa," Mthembu said.

Reported tension over Muthambi's stance on encryption has come as South Africa's digital migration process officially launched this month in the Northern Cape.

Areas surrounding the deep space telescope Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project are set to receive subsidised set-top boxes first in the country.

Source: [Fin24](#) via News24Wire.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>