

Cell-C to roll out more base stations

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Cell C will roll out an additional 100 base stations in Johannesburg over the next three months to increase its network capacity and improve quality, it said on Thursday, 22 August.



The first 19 stations will go live by the end of this month, in addition to 959 existing sites in the city. This network expansion cost about R200m, the telecommunications company said.

Cell C has been criticised by subscribers who have complained about poor network reception, incorrect billing, call dropping and a lack of service overall.

In its recent assessment of service quality, the Independent Communications Authority of SA found that Cell C had the worst rate of dropped calls of all cellphone operators in Johannesburg.

The areas in Johannesburg earmarked for additional base stations include Sandton, Fourways, Bryanston, Morningside, Soweto and Benoni.

Cell C's chief executive Alan Knott-Craig said traffic on Cell C's network had doubled over the past year. "We've been hard at work rolling out new sites and installing additional capacity to cater for this growth and restore quality," he said.

"In particular, the networks in Johannesburg and Pretoria have been taking strain. In addition to the new sites, we have also embarked on a project to optimise close to 900 existing sites in Johannesburg and Pretoria to improve coverage and minimise interference on the network in high-density areas."

The network expansion in Johannesburg is expected to be completed by the end of November. Cell C will also build an additional 70 indoor coverage sites in Johannesburg and Pretoria.

By the end of this year, the company expects to have 4,340 outdoor and indoor sites live.