



## PUBLIC NOTICE

# COVID-19 NOT LINKED TO 5G AND TELECOMS NETWORKS

### FALSE CLAIMS

False claims circulating on the social media platforms that 5G technology is linked to Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) have appeared online in Papua New Guinea. In some countries, network infrastructure has been attacked and threats made against telecommunications operators and their staff as a result of the panic and fear that has been created by these false claims. NICTA is aware of verbal hostility experienced by staff of telecommunications operators in Papua New Guinea.

### NICTA RESPONSE

As the National ICT Regulator, the National Information and Communications Technology Authority (NICTA) is obligated to provide accurate information relating to ICT matters to the general public and wishes to make the following statement:

- **There are no current or planned deployments of 5G technology in Papua New Guinea and NICTA has not issued a license to any operator to provide 5G services.**
- **The claimed linkage between 5G (or any other telecommunications technology) and COVID-19 is absolutely false, and without any foundation whatsoever.**
- **Health information about COVID-19 should be obtained from the Department of Health and World Health Organization (WHO) and not from unreliable sources.**
- **NICTA urges Facebook, other social media platforms and group administrators to remove any fake news relating to COVID-19.**
- **Vandalising of telecommunications infrastructure will affect telecommunications services including calls, data and broadcasting services which are classified as essential services.**
- **Tampering with telecommunications equipment, infrastructure and obstruction of ICT operations, are offences subject to severe penalties under the NICT Act 2009; and**
- **Generating and spreading misinformation are offences subject to severe penalties under the Cyber Crime Act and Orders under State of Emergency.**

We need our telecommunications, including broadcasting services and infrastructure to be secure, fully operational and totally reliable at times like these and to fight COVID-19. For these services and infrastructure to be put at risk, because of the circulation of completely irresponsible and false claims is intolerable.

NICTA will be assisting law enforcement agencies, network operators and other licensed service providers to identify and take strong action against anybody who does not heed the warning in this message and commits offences under the NICT Act 2009 and other relevant legislation.

### Contact

For further information, please contact **Mr. Hans Adeg** on telephone number: **3033271** and or email: [hadeg@nicta.gov.pg](mailto:hadeg@nicta.gov.pg)

**Charles S. Punaha**  
Chief Executive Officer