

CUSTOMERS' FRUSTRATIONS DUE TO THE INEFFICIENCIES OF THE CIPC

Category: Commercial Law, Media and OTT
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The newly formed Companies and Intellectual Property Commission ("CIPC"), established "with the aim of promoting growth, employment, innovation, stability, good governance, confidence and international competitiveness." Further stated on the CIPC's website, is that it "seeks to assert the commission as a credible independent and transparent regulator, on par with the rest of the world."

We have to use CIPC to lodge for the Registration of Companies, Co-operatives and Intellectual Property Rights (trade marks, patents, designs and copyright), as well as the maintenance thereof, amongst other things. This can however prove to be a difficult when interacting with the CIPC.

Lodging documents with CIPC can be such a nightmare. Provided on the CIPC homepage is link: "Forms and supporting documents required when transacting with CIPC for companies and close corporations", which provides the prescribed documentation to be accompanied by all forms for companies and close corporations. However, when you lodge documents as prescribed in the link, you will encounter issues regarding the accompanying documentation as it seems, the CIPC keeps changing the format of the documents that have to be lodged and the annexures thereto.

The CIPC provides little or no feedback regarding any lodged applications hence, you as a client have to consistently follow up on the progress. It is also very difficult to get feedback over the phone, as it either does not get answered or the call centre agents have no idea what you are enquiring about.

Getting applications processed and approved thus takes a lengthy period which is always unreasonable as it wastes clients funds and time when you have to lodge the same document two to three times over a period of three to four months and they all get rejected for one reason or the other despite compliance with the prescribed manner in which to lodge such documents.

This process is burdensome on parties that have to liaise with the CIPC on behalf of their clients. It further leads to unnecessary delays and you constantly have to explain to clients why their applications are not getting processed.

The CIPC is now implementing a fax to email system so that instead of people going to stand in long queues to lodge their company documents, they can simply fax their documents directly to the CIPC. If this system actually gets implemented it will save time and money but we are all going to have to wait and see how successful it will be.