

To: all Radio- & TV stations in Sint Maarten

Philipsburg, March 23<sup>th</sup> 2020

*RE: Infomercials COVID-19 by DCOMM*

Dear Sir, Madame,

As you may have learned via the media, the COVID-19 Coronavirus is spreading rapidly around the globe, whereby the latest figures show that there are now more than 350K confirmed Corona cases spread over 192 countries & territories, with a global death toll over 15 thousand. It's now also described by the WHO as a **Pandemic** due to the speed and scale of the virus transmission.

In order to limit the effects to Sint Maarten, the Prime Minister, in the capacity as Chair of the EOC, launched a multi-media COVID-19 campaign, to duly inform the general public of the effects of Coronavirus, the measures taken by Government in order to mitigate, and provide important instructions that our residents should be following to stop the spread. In order to get the message out, full cooperation within the Telecom Sector is imperative.

The EOC is therefore requesting all Radio- & TV stations in Sint Maarten to make daily airtime available – *zero rated* - for important messages & infomercials from the EOC regarding COVID-19.

While we do not foresee any problems with your continued cooperation in this matter, we wish to remind you that requests for airtime in emergency situations are also formulated in the Law and “Machtingen” of all providers (*see articles below*), whereby non-compliance can have far reaching consequences.

**The LV Rampenbestrijding (AB 2013, GT no.7 / 8.1, 8.2)**

*Describes the Authority of the PM to give orders that are deemed necessary in “rampenbestrijding”*

**LB Rampenplan Sint Maarten (AB 2013, GT no 150, chapter 7)**

*“Waarschuwing” via Radio/ TV in emergency situations*

**Machting of Providers (Article 15 or 16 & 25 or 26)**

*Obligation to give “Zendtijd” to the minister (max 30 min per day) + rights for (partial) network takeover under special circumstances*

Officials of the Department of Communication (DCOMM) of the Government of Sint Maarten, will contact you within short for the dissemination of information, and we are counting on your full cooperation in getting our community informed.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of the above mentioned, please feel free to contact Ms. Judianne Labega-Hoeve (Deputy-Director BTP & ESF 2 Coordinator), who is tasked with all matters related to ESF 2 including relaying important instruction from the Prime Minister and current chair of the EOC to the industries we are tasked to regulate.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

A.A. Carty  
Director Bureau Telecommunications and Post St. Maarten

