

## **Telecom Namibia, XON Systems and Juniper Networks invest in network academy**

Telecom Namibia has set up a Telecom Namibia Juniper Networks Academy in conjunction with pan-African ICT group, XON Systems and Juniper Networks to boost the training of network engineers in its training facility.

Namibian minister of information and communication technology (ICT), the Honourable Joel Kaapanda, opened the training facility and described it as a laudable initiative by Telecom Namibia that is: "...in line with the overall policy of government and my ministry for capacity-building and human resource development to meet the growing requirements of the industry in terms of trained personnel."

"The Telecom Namibia Juniper Networks Academy is designed to offer an environment conducive to a spirit of innovation through training and knowledge transfer," says Charl Coetzee, MD of XON. "It will deliver a wide range of technical courses and aims to address gaps in training provision to help network engineers into sustainable employment in the ICT sector."

The first phase of the programme, launched in November last year, prepared instructors to lead training throughout the year in what is now the second phase and graduates will be trained to several internationally recognised certifications using a custom-built laboratory.

Graduates will receive internationally recognised qualifications for Juniper Networks' Service Provider Routing and Switching Track, the Enterprise Routing and Switching Track, and the Security Track. Some of the recognised certifications include JNCIE-SP, JNCIE-ENT and JNCIE-SEC, related to general fields in the network engineering track. These qualifications will support existing studies with specialisation in engineering, software development, microelectronics, and telecommunication. Further steps may include rolling the programme into the Polytechnic of Namibia.

Frans Ndoroma, the MD of Telecom Namibia, says: "The Telecom Namibia Juniper Network Academy is set to be one of the most advanced learning facilities in Africa and is a sign of the development that can be achieved through partnerships. The facility will play an important role in training network administrators to properly handle the installation and setting up of Juniper-

based networking solutions.”

Ndoroma says the academy will train network engineers to look after the telecommunications networks already built and to design and develop the networks for the future to maintain the growth and stimulation of the economy.

Coetzee says that the Telecom Namibia Juniper Networks Academy is a key component of ensuring sustainability and expertise local to Namibia where Namibians can maintain their own infrastructure.

“Students will be trained in the laboratory which comprises the same Juniper Networks equipment employed by Telecom Namibia for its universal backhaul, core and edge networks. The results will be beneficial to the people of Namibia as well as to one of the core operations of the government’s ICT department in bringing connectivity to the people of Namibia but also core carrier services to neighbouring African countries,” Coetzee says.

Courses will take place in the Telecom Namibia Training Centre, which is situated on Hosea Kutako Avenue, Pioneerspark, Windhoek.

The academy will be run by Telecom Namibia, Juniper Networks and XON for the first year and then be handed over to Polytechnic of Namibia.