

Lisa Thornton

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- Founder and Director, **Lisa Thornton Inc**, the leading law firm in South Africa specializing in electronic communications and information law, and **Lisa Thornton Consulting**, a sister company engaged in consulting work in the USA
- Judicial clerk, **Justice Johann Kriegler, Constitutional Court of South Africa**
- Editor and author, **Telecommunications Law in South Africa**, the only comprehensive book on the subject
- Founder and Trustee, **Thanksgiving Education Trust**, providing financial assistance to young people for education and training opportunities

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

Lisa Thornton Inc, South Africa

Founder and Director. Law firm specializing in commercial, regulatory and policy aspects of telecommunications, broadcasting and new media, computer, Internet, E-commerce, and access to information law

Honors:

- Named the leading lawyer in the area of technology, media and communications law in South Africa by *PLC Which Lawyer?*
- Named the leading telecommunications lawyer in South Africa in *Cross Border – Communications Handbook*
- Listed in *The International Who's Who of Business Lawyers*

Recent Practice Highlights:

- Appointed an adjudicator by the South African Institute of Intellectual Property Law to resolve domain name disputes
- Advisor to the Department of Public Enterprises on the creation Broadband Infraco, a state owned communications infrastructure company
- Advisor to the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa on policy issues
- Advisor to undersea cable operator, Seacom, on regulatory matters in South Africa
- Adviser to a South African provincial government on a project to rollout broadband infrastructure and services

April 2000-present

Edward Nathan & Friedland and Hofmeyr Herbstein & Gihwala, South Africa

Attorney. In addition to a wide ranging commercial and administrative law practice, advised various government departments in the development of legislation regarding communications, competition, housing subsidies, the expropriation of land, elections, and equality

February 1997-March 2000

Constitutional Court of South Africa, South Africa

Judicial clerk for Justice Johann Kriegler. Researched and analyzed matters that came before the Constitutional Court of South Africa in its inaugural years

Landmark Cases:

Death penalty, www.constitutionalcourt.org.za/uhtbin/hyperion-image/J-CCT3-94

Certification of the Constitution of South Africa, <http://196.41.167.18/uhtbin/hyperion-image/J-CCT37-96>

Appropriate use of public power, www.constitutionalcourt.org.za/uhtbin/hyperion-image/J-CCT3-94

January 1995-December 1996

Centre for Human Rights, United Nations Operation Mozambique, Independent Electoral Commission, and Institute for Democracy in South Africa, South Africa and Mozambique

Advisor. Served as an advisor to various organizations involved in transitions to democracy; issues included constitutional negotiations, elections and equality legislation

July 1993-December 1994

Frost & Jacobs, Cincinnati, OH and Smithwick & Belendiuk, Washington, DC

Associate. Represented communications clients in commercial, transactional, and regulatory law matters

June 1989-July 1993

McCaw Cellular Communications, Washington, DC, USA

Consultant. Consulted the legal and regulatory office of this major wireless telecommunications operator, responsible for compliance issues

July 1985-May 1989

SELECTED EXPERIENCES

Advised the **Ministry for Communications** in South Africa -

- The invitation for the application for the third mobile cellular license
- Electronic commerce policy (see <http://www.ecomm-debate.co.za/docs/report.html>)

Advised the South African Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, the Independent Broadcasting Authority and the successor organisation, the **Independent Communications Authority of South Africa** -

- Regulations, including, interconnection and facilities leasing, rights of way, licensing, and pricing
- The constitutionality of license fees
- Powers of and procedures for inspectors
- Implementation of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act
- Implications of the Competition Act
- Policy development for satellite broadcasting
- Monitoring licensees and imposing sanctions
- License applications for 1800 MHz frequencies by mobile cellular operators

Advised the **Competition Commission** in South Africa -

- *The State of Competition in the Telecommunications Sector in South Africa*, available online at internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/media/library/conference_5th_capetown_2006/AppendixIII.pdf
- Implications of the Electronic Communications Act

Advised the **Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa** -

- Definitions of universal service, universal access, under-served areas, and needy persons
- Convergence and the impact of the EC Act on the Agency
- Under serviced area licences and their sustainability

Advised government institutions regarding the **development of legislation** -

- Equality legislation (SA)
- Housing legislation (SA)
- Elections legislation (SA)
- Expropriation legislation (SA)
- Communications legislation (Namibia)

Advisor to clients with regard to **out-sourcing** information technology requirements, and preparation of requests for and evaluation of **tenders**

Conducted **due diligences** with regard to communications and media licenses in African countries for various clients, including Telecel

Advisor to numerous clients regarding the **licensing** of networks and services, and other regulatory issues, such as **interconnection, pricing, and spectrum**; including entities involved in broadcasting, satellite, mobile cellular, traditional fixed line, IP, and undersea cable communications, as well as new technologies such as WiFi and WiMax

Advisor to various government and government owned entities regarding requirements of South African **public finance regulation**

Advisor to clients regarding the **implementation of new legislation**, including the electronic communications legislation, interception legislation, electronic transactions legislation, and access to information legislation

Advisor to clients on **contractual and transactional** matters, as well as strategic matters

Advisor to clients on **competition** matters, including complaints and mergers

Developed courses on licensing and interconnection on behalf of the International Telecommunication Union and taught courses on licensing, interconnection and pricing on behalf of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation for the Telecommunications Regulators Association of Southern Africa

QUALIFICATIONS

LLB, distinction in international law, **University of the Witwatersrand**, Johannesburg, South Africa
1999

Juris Doctor, **Georgetown University Law Centre**, Washington, DC, USA
1989

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science/Business, Magna Cum Laude, distinction in political science, **Georgetown College**, Georgetown, Kentucky, USA
1985