

Beware

fly-by-night

online auctions



South African Institute of Auctioneers president, John Cowing

Covid-19 lockdown restrictions have led to an unprecedented migration to online auctions as a means of selling anything from properties and cars to office furniture and even household goods.

New companies are emerging using social media marketing to encourage buyers to bid or make offers on goods and buyers in the agricultural industry can be duped into participating in a sale process or so-called auction that is not transparent, legal or safe.

As a result, the South African Institute of Auctioneers (SAIA), has noticed an uptick in complaints leveled at fly-by-night auctioneers who do not fulfill their obligations to deliver goods or choose to provide alternative goods that are not what the customers bid for. There have also been reports of problems associated with the refunding of deposits where these are required.

“Unfortunately, it is only when problems arise that the bidder realizes they are dealing with unprofessional sellers purporting to be Bonafede auctioneers and this should send a clear signal to the public to only deal with professional, registered auctioneers who are members of SAIA. Before committing to purchase on a so-called auction site, a simple check on the SAIA webpage will dispel any concerns you may have. Our members have remained resilient in the face of the virus and are among the leaders in online auctioneering,” says SAIA chairman, John Cowing.

He continues that the institute’s members comply with all requirement and legal requirements to ensure honest and fair auctions. Most will display their membership credentials on their website which can be verified by our office if the bidder has any doubt. “Our members are responsible custodians of assets who prescribe to our code of conduct. You are well advised to establish who in fact you are dealing with before parting with money. These auctions are putting a stain on our industry and we hope in time with legislation we will be able to eradicate these illicit traders.

“While we actively promote the growth of the industry and the uptake of new technologies, we do not support these organised crime syndicates. You can often find bargains at auction but put simply, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably isn’t true.

It also pays to go to the institute’s website www.auctioneering.co.za to explore member offerings or phone the Hotline on 021 813 6342 or WhatsApp 067 117 7049 with any queries,” concludes John.

South African Institute of Auctioneers, Sonja Styger, SAIA Secretary, Tel: (021) 813 6342, Fax: 086 660 5276, Email: sonja.styger@auctioneering.co.za

Prepared on behalf of South African Institute of Auctioneers, Sonja Styger, SAIA Secretary, Tel: (021) 813 6342, Fax: 086 660 5276, Email: sonja.styger@auctioneering.co.za,

By Media Savvy Communications, Raymond Campling, Tel: (011) 973 0108, Cell: 076 297 2775, Email: media@mediasavvy.biz Web: www.mediasavvy.co.za

