
GENERAL NOTICE

NOTICE 898 OF 2011

GOVERNMENT NOTICE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

POLICY DIRECTIONS DRAFTED IN TERMS OF SECTION 3(2) OF THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS ACT, 2005 (ACT NO. 36 OF 2005)

I, Dina Pule Minister of Communications, hereby give notice of intention to make Policy Directions to the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) on Exploitation of the Digital Dividend Spectrum and Radio-Frequency Spectrum for Electronic Communications Services in the schedule in terms of section 3(2) of the Electronic Communications Act, 2005 (Act No. 36 of 2005).

Interested persons are hereby invited to furnish written submissions on the proposed Policy Directions to ICASA on Exploitation of the Digital Dividend Spectrum and Radio-Frequency Spectrum for Electronic Communications Services, within 30 calendar days of the date of publication of this notice at any of the following addresses:

For attention: Ms Cynthia Lesufi
Deputy-Director, Frequency Spectrum
Department of Communications;
Post to: Private Bag X860
Pretoria
0001;
or deliver to: First Floor, Block F
iParioli Office Park
399 Duncan Street
Hatfield, Pretoria
or fax to : (012) 421 7019;
or e-mail to: spectrum@doc.gov.za

Please note that submissions received after the closing date may be disregarded

Ms. Cynthia Lesufi can be reached at tel. (012) 427 8512/ 082 4797654 for any enquiries



Dina Pule
Minister of Communications



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Department:
Communications
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DRAFT POLICY DIRECTIONS FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN HIGH DEMAND SPECTRUM

DECEMBER 2011

**POLICY DIRECTIONS DRAFTED IN TERMS OF SECTION 3(2) OF THE
ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS ACT, 2005 (ACT NO. 36 OF 2005)**

I, Ms. Dina Pule Minister of Communications, hereby publish the National Radio-Frequency Spectrum Policy Directions in the schedule, in terms of section 3(2) of the Electronic Communications Act 2005 (Act No. 36 of 2006),

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dina Pule', with a small circle above the 'i'.

Ms. Dina Pule, MP

Minister of Communications

**POLICY DIRECTIONS
FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN HIGH DEMAND SPECTRUM**

1. Background

1.1. The intention of Government is to ensure that the award of licences in high-demand parts of the radio spectrum is directed towards the attainment of the goals of universal service and access for all. Therefore licensing of high demand spectrum should first and foremost seek to achieve the following national policy objectives:

- 1.1.1. Facilitate the introduction of new national and rural providers of electronic communications, including broadband.
- 1.1.2. Ensure that the participating licensees contribute broad based back economic empowerment.
- 1.1.3. Impose universal access and service obligations to promote uptake and usage of electronic communications in rural and urban poor settlements.

1.2. The frequency band 790 – 862 MHz ("800 MHz") is ideally suited for achieving broadband nationwide coverage, in building penetration and indoor coverage, whereas the frequency band, 2500 – 2690 MHz ("2.6 GHz"), is ideally suited to providing the high capacity needed to carry traffic in densely populated areas. Therefore the combination is key for providing broadband everywhere, achieving full coverage everywhere, and not disconnected islands of hotspots.

1.3. With the use of 800 MHz, the goal of delivering mass market broadband comes at a lower cost, because broadband wireless coverage of a given area could be achieved with fewer base stations than a roll out of the same coverage at a 2000 MHz range.

1.4. A combinational licensing approach will assist Government in achieving the objectives of delivering an efficient, competitive and responsive infrastructure network.

2. Policy Directions

2.1. The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) is hereby directed to in terms of section 3(2) of the ECA to:

2.1.1. Facilitate different licensing methods for Electronic Communications Services (ECS) in high demand spectrum bands and determine an appropriate licensing methodology to achieve the following objectives:

2.1.1.1. Universal access and broadband for all.

2.1.1.2. Introduction of new entrants.

2.1.1.3. Economic empowerment.

2.1.2. Facilitate the licensing of spectrum in 800 MHz based on a wholesale open access network, due to the limited bandwidth in this band.

2.1.3. Facilitate the licensing of spectrum in 2.6 GHz to multiple operators, due to the amount of bandwidth available in this band. In this regard the Authority should ensure that a portion of this frequency band is set aside for new licensees.

2.1.4. Ensure that auction would be considered only as a last resort, where necessary, in circumstances where there are competing applications who meet the stated policy objects.

2.1.5. Ensure that where the demand for radio-frequency spectrum exceeds available bandwidth auctions are applied as for assignment to users.

2.1.6. Ensure that broadband is also available in sparsely populated, rural and remote areas, ICASA is therefore mandated to establish obligations on priority stages for network roll out on the basis of a number of inhabitants per area.

2.1.7. Ensure efficient spectrum utilization and to allow for the introduction of new entrants, ICASA should explore a combinational award of the 800 MHz and 2.6 GHz bands for wireless broadband access applications.



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Department:
Communications
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DRAFT POLICY DIRECTIONS ON EXPLOITING THE DIGITAL DIVIDEND

DECEMBER 2011

**POLICY DIRECTIONS DRAFTED IN TERMS OF SECTION 3(2) OF THE
ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS ACT, 2005 (ACT NO. 36 OF 2005)**

I, Ms. Dina Pule Minister of Communications, hereby publish the National Radio-Frequency Spectrum Policy Directions in the schedule, in terms of section 3(2) of the Electronic Communications Act 2005 (Act No. 36 of 2006),



Ms. Dina Pule, MP

Minister of Communications

POLICY DIRECTIONS ON EXPLOITING THE DIGITAL DIVIDEND

1. Background

- 1.1. The “digital dividend” is those frequencies that will become available for other services as a result of the switchover from analogue television to the more spectrum efficient digital terrestrial television (DTT). The digital dividend provides great scope for expansion of existing TV services and the introduction of new services.
- 1.2. This draft policy direction is intended to consider the scope of the action to be taken at the national level to promote the efficient use of the digital dividend spectrum in the frequency bands 174 – 230 MHz and 470 – 790 MHz.
- 1.3. The principal objective is to ascertain what action needs to be taken to ensure that the benefits of the digital dividend are maximised, whilst, at the same time, complying with the provisions of the International Telecommunication Union Regional Agreement of the planning of digital terrestrial television broadcasting services in ITU Region 1 (GE-06 Agreement).

2. Policy Directions

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) is hereby directed to in terms of section 3(2) of the Electronic Communications Act of 2005 (Act No.36 of 2005) to:

- 2.1. Consider that the band 790 – 862 MHz ("800 MHz") as allocated by the World Radiocommunication Conference 2007 (WRC-07) for Mobile except aeronautical mobile including International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) applications is declared as the first phase of the digital dividend.
- 2.2. Undertake an inquiry into the rational and efficient exploitation of the remaining Very-High Frequency (VHF) and Ultra-High Frequency (UHF) spectrum for future digital dividends, and report to the Minister on the following issues:
 - 2.2.1. Future spectrum requirements for all 3 spheres of digital terrestrial television broadcasting (public, community, commercial) in the next 10 years;
 - 2.2.2. Future spectrum requirements for digital sound broadcasting after analogue switch-off;
 - 2.2.3. Possible use of "white space" technologies;
 - 2.2.4. Implementation of large and small multiplexes within the framework of the national digital broadcasting frequency plan;
 - 2.2.5. Future spectrum requirements for mobile broadband applications within the digital dividend over the next 10 years;
 - 2.2.6. Take into consideration the possible impact of any recommendations made on the digital dividend on neighbouring countries that are parties to the GE-06 Agreement.