



# Government Gazette Staatskoerant

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA

Vol. 558

Pretoria, 14 December 2011  
Desember

**No. 34848**

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## GENERAL NOTICE

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### 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.

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## 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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