



## Independent Communications Authority of South Africa

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **ICASA Publishes the Discussion Document On Dynamic And Opportunistic Spectrum Management**

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**Johannesburg** – The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa hereby informs all stakeholders and the media that a Discussion Document on Dynamic and Opportunistic Spectrum Management has been published for public comment. This discussion document is aimed at explaining the concept and putting it into the public domain. It's done in an endeavor to enable and initiate the process of developing a regulatory framework for dynamic spectrum access.

The discussion document proposes a regulatory framework for dynamic spectrum assignment (DSA) in order to enable the emergence of new technologies and techniques that promote more intensive and efficient use of radio frequency spectrum.

The proposal broadly reflects recommendations made in the digital readiness pillar of the National Broadband Policy, SA Connect.

This discussion document further proposes the adoption of dynamic spectrum assignment on a geolocation basis as one of the techniques to achieve the priorities of SA Connect. In particular, it proposes regulations that would enable broadband services on a secondary-user assignment basis in the 470-694 MHz band currently utilized exclusively for the terrestrial broadcasting service, hereafter referred to as TV White Space (TVWS) spectrum utilization. It would constitute the first phase of dynamic spectrum assignment in South Africa. TVWS spectrum is spectrum unused by broadcasters in the broadcasting band which could be used for broadband access, for instance.

The demand for wireless broadband capacity is growing much faster than the availability of new spectrum for supporting wireless infrastructure deployment. The National Development Plan and SA Connect advocate for broadband to reach "a critical mass of South Africans". To meet this demand, future generations of wireless technology and services will not only be required to increase their efficiency in terms of bits per second per hertz. They will also require new wireless network architectures and new approaches to spectrum management.

While the Discussion Document introduces a broader view of the dynamic spectrum access concept, it focuses on technical considerations for first implementation of the concept of white-space use in the bands allocated for TV broadcasting.

Governments and regulators around the world are now taking the next step in the evolution of spectrum policy i.e. Dynamic spectrum access. It is a way of dealing with spectrum that is placed between the traditional model of exclusive spectrum assignment and the spectrum commons (or licence-exempt spectrum use).

Dynamic Spectrum Access is an umbrella term used to describe a set of technologies and techniques that enable radio communication devices to opportunistically transmit on available radio spectrum. These technologies and techniques will greatly relieve the problem of the shortage of spectrum for broadband in the bands below 1 GHz. They could greatly contribute to consumers and their devices having wireless bandwidth when and where they need it.

The discussion document is therefore aimed at introducing greater spectrum efficiency, a key requirement in terms of section 30(2) (b) of the Electronic Communications Act of 2005.

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