



Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
Pinmill Farm, 164 Katherine Street, Sandton
Private Bag X10002, Sandton, 2146

MEDIA RELEASE

ICASA moves with emphasis on the reduction of cost of communication to reach acceptable levels for the benefit of consumers

18 November 2017~~17 November 2017~~

Johannesburg – The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) is committed to ensuring that the cost of communication, particularly the cost of data, is reduced to acceptable levels to the ultimate of benefit consumers. In this regard, ICASA has developed a comprehensive plan that outlines its short, medium and long term interventions to ensure greater transparency of communication services and also to bring down the cost of communication in South Africa.

One of the critical short term interventions is the review of the consumer protection regulations known as the End-User and Subscriber Service Charter (EUSSC). The purpose of these regulation is to protect the rights of consumers by, among others, ensuring that end-users are provided with sufficient information that will assist them in making informed decisions; as well as facilitate redress for end-users who have been unfairly treated where applicable.

On 07 August 2017 ICASA published the first draft of the End-User and Subscriber Service Charter Regulations for interested stakeholders to make their comments and inputs on specific sections of the Regulations. ICASA received 20 submissions. Upon consideration of the submissions received from stakeholders, ICASA decided to publish a second draft Regulations for further stakeholder consultation.

“The review of the Regulations was necessitated by general concerns raised by various stakeholders, including consumer groups and social media campaigns, with regards to data expiry rules, high out-of-bundle rates and rules and also out-of-bundle voice and SMS rules currently applied by licensees”, says ICASA Councillor Botlenyana Mokhele.

These concerns range from consumer complaints about the unfairness arising from the premature expiry of data bundles and/or forfeiture of unused data if it is not used within a particular period.

The key interventions in terms of the draft Regulation published are the following:

1. Expiry of data – all licensees are required to provide prepaid data bundles with minimum expiry period of three (3) years, save where such prepaid data bundles have been exhausted prior to the expiry of three (3) years.
2. Out of bundle billing – licensees are required to send usage notifications for data depletion to end-users, and the intervals must show 50%, 75%, 90% and 100% service depletion. The notification must be through an SMS, push notification or any other applicable means.
3. Rollover of unused minutes and/or data – where a network provider is required to provide an option to post-paid users to roll over unused monthly data allocation to the next billing period or to transfer the monthly data allocation or a portion thereof to another end-user on the same network.
4. End-users must be given an option to opt-in or opt-out of being charged out of bundle data rates to avoid bill shock.

All interested stakeholders have until 03 January 2018 to submit their written comments or representations to ICASA for consideration. ICASA will then hold public hearings on the matter from 7 – 9 February 2017 and it is anticipated that the final Regulations will be promulgated by 31 March 2017.

“We would like to encourage all interested parties to comment on the draft regulations and to actively part take in the ensuing public participation processes”, concludes Mokhele.

Ends...

For all media enquiries please contact:

Paseka Maleka

011 566 3455

079 509 0702

pmaleka@icasa.org.za