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MEDIA RELEASE

ICASA welcomes the provisional findings and recommendations by the Competition Commission following the data services market inquiry

27 April 2019

Pretoria – The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) welcomes the Competition Commission’s Provisional Findings and Recommendations Report released on 24 April 2019 following the Data Services Market Inquiry commenced by the Commission in 2017.

The Report confirms ICASA’s recent observations and findings that the cost of data services is high in South Africa relative to peer countries. The Report further recommends measures that needs to be taken to address the high cost of data. The recommendations are broadly in line with the regulatory interventions that ICASA is taking in this regard.

The recent promulgation and implementation of the End-User and Subscriber Service Charter Amendment Regulations (EUSSC) has since brought some much-needed relief to consumers against unfair business rules in the communications sector especially as it relates to the expiry of data bundles, out of bundle charging and lack of transparency in the provision of services. In particular, and as a result of the measures implemented through the EUSSC, there has been a recent downward trend in out of bundle tariffs charged by operators. ICASA continues to monitor compliance with regards to the implementation of the requirements of the EUSSC.

ICASA recently published the Tariff Analysis Report (for the period ended 31 December 2018). This report confirms that MTN and Vodacom charge higher prices for the 1GB and 3GB data bundle at R149 and R299 respectively. The Tariff Analysis Report further indicates that Rain’s “One Plan Package” prepaid mobile data offering of R50 for a 1GB bundle remains the most affordable when compared to the offers from other MNOs (Mobile Network Operators) and MVNOs (Mobile Virtual Network Operators).

ICASA has further commenced a market review into mobile data services. The purposes of the review is to assess the effectiveness of the market for provision of

mobile data services and where appropriate impose procompetitive remedies on players with significant market power. This review is likely to be completed by end of the 2019/20 FY.

As regards the licensing of spectrum, the Authority intends to embark on the licensing process upon consideration of the Policy Directive from the Minister of Communications which is expected to be released soon.

ICASA will continue to work in close collaboration with the Commission to address competition concerns in the ICT sector.

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