



**Independent Communications Authority of South Africa**

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**Ref No: 13/2/1/1/10**

**TO: ALL ECS AND ECNS LICENSEES**

Dear Sir/ Madam

**RE: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE PACKAGES CONSIDERING COVID -19 OUTBREAK**

1. The above matter refers.
2. As you are aware, the COVID-19 ("Coronavirus") has affected the globe and reached South African shores, with 116 South Africans reported to have been infected as of Wednesday, 18 March 2020.
3. On 15 March 2020, the President, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, declared a national state of disaster in terms of the Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002, with necessary precautionary measures being put in place to contain the spread of the Coronavirus. To a large extent, isolation has been viewed as a measure to control the spread of the Coronavirus. The result of such isolation necessitates that people contact, *inter alia*, health care professionals, the National Institute of Communicable Diseases and employers. Further, some people are working and studying from home. Schools will be closed from 18 March 2020 and will remain so until after the Easter weekend. Public gatherings have also been limited and as a result certain events have been cancelled. This will inevitably increase data usage by consumers.

4. As you can appreciate, poverty is one of the challenges facing South Africa. In addition to dealing with the actual and potential infection, South Africans are affected by the impact of the Coronavirus. The economy will, as a result, be adversely impacted.
5. In his statement issued on 15 March 2020, our President said that South Africans, including business must respond to the Coronavirus as a united nation to a common threat. Further, he stated that this national emergency demands cooperation, collaboration and common action; more than that, it requires solidarity, understanding and compassion. He further urged those who have resources and those who are healthy to assist those who are in need and who are vulnerable.
6. He further stated that all state institutions will be mobilised to lead this effort, but, if the country is to succeed, every company, trade union, NGO, university, college, school, religious group and taxi association will need to play its part.
7. In light of the above, the Authority would like to humbly entreat all licensees to provide free electronic communications service packages, at their discretion, to their subscribers in order to assist them with communications services during this disaster period, as an effort to minimise the impact of the Coronavirus.
8. You are further requested to advise the Authority of measures your entity has taken or intends to take to assist its subscribers during this disaster period.
9. Kindly note that the Authority is currently considering regulatory compliance and spectrum relief measures which could be applied during this disaster period. Kindly indicate the enabling regulatory measures required by your entity during this period.

10. We will appreciate your consideration in relation to the above. Kindly revert to the Authority by Friday, 20 March 2020.

Yours sincerely,



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**Dr Keabetswe Modimoeng**  
**Acting Chairperson**  
**Date: 18 March 2020**