



PUBLIC NOTICE

Moratorium on licensing of certain, Radio Frequency Spectrum Dependent, Telecommunication Licences

The Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ) wishes to inform the public, prospective applicants and stakeholders that the submission and processing of applications for telecommunication services licences are provided for in the Postal and Telecommunications (Licensing, Registration and Certification) Regulations of 2021 published in Statutory Instrument No.12 of 2021(the Regulations).

The Regulations introduced a converged licensing framework which provides for both legacy and additional telecommunication licences including Unified Telecommunications Licence; Telecommunication Licence for Network Facilities Services; Telecommunication Licence for Network Services; Telecommunication Licence for Application Services; Telecommunications Licence for Special Services; Rural Fixed Broadband Wireless Access Systems; amongst others.

Furthermore, the new framework ushers in service and technology neutrality to those operators who would have migrated to converged licences OR, in the case of new entrants, those who have secured converged licences.

Currently, the Authority is in the process of migrating legacy Public Network Operator licences, (i.e., Fixed / Mobile / Internet Access Provider) to converged licences. The process is being done on an opt-in and voluntary basis.

It is to be noted that infrastructure/network rollout and service provision under some licences, both legacy and new, would be highly dependent on the availability of radio frequency spectrum (spectrum) within certain frequency ranges. Due to the scarcity of spectrum resources, and given the relatively small geographical area of Zimbabwe as well as the small market size, only a limited optimal number of Operators can be accommodated. This is meant to enable operators to build cost efficient networks, and fully exploit economies of scale, aimed at enhancing service affordability and operator viability.

It is against the afore-stated background that the Regulations, in s14, stipulate that certain applications could be made upon issuance, by POTRAZ, of a general notice inviting interested persons to apply for the respective licences.

In this vein, the Authority hereby informs the public, prospective applicants, and stakeholders that, henceforth, the application for spectrum-dependent Telecommunications licences should only be made upon invitation by the Authority. Accordingly, until further notice, the Authority will not be receiving or considering unsolicited applications for the following licences:

- i) Unified Telecommunications Licence – unless the business model is based on optic fibre and/or satellite technologies only.
- ii) Telecommunication Licence for Network Services – unless the business model is based on optic fibre and/or satellite technologies only
- iii) Legacy Public Network Operator licences, (i.e., Fixed / Mobile / Internet Access Provider) – unless the business model is based on optic fibre and/or satellite technologies only.

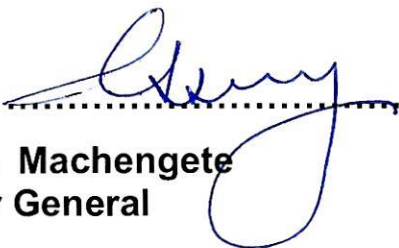
Upon ascertaining the optimal number of spectrum dependent players, the Authority will inform stakeholders accordingly, and may issue a general public notice inviting applications for the aforementioned Telecommunication Licences.

Meanwhile, the Authority remains open to receiving applications for the rest of converged licences namely:

- i) Telecommunication Licence for Network Facilities Services
- ii) Telecommunication Licence for Application Services including:
 - Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO) licences
 - Internet Services Provider licences
 - Satellite based Virtual Network licences
 - Fixed Virtual Network Operator (FVNO) licences

- iii) Telecommunications Licence for Special Services: Rural Fixed Broadband Wireless Access Systems and;
- iv) Licences for Networks that are solely based on optic fibre and/or satellite technologies

The public is encouraged to engage the undersigned should there be need for further clarification.

Signed: 

Dr G. K. Machengete
Director General

Date: 