

INDEPENDENT COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**NOTICE 4130 OF 2026****NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CONDUCT MARKET INQUIRY
INTO THE AFFORDABILITY OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN SOUTH
AFRICA**

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa ("the Authority") hereby publishes a notice of intention to conduct an inquiry into the affordability of telecommunications services in South Africa, in terms of section 4B of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act, 2000 (Act No.13 of 2000), to the extent reflected in the Schedule.

Mothibi G Ramusi**Chairperson**



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa ("the Authority") hereby gives notice of its intention to conduct an inquiry into the affordability of telecommunications services in South Africa, in terms of section 4B of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act, 2000 (Act No.13 of 2000) ("the ICASA Act").
- 1.2. This Inquiry is explicitly aligned with ICASA's statutory mandate, previous market inquiries into data services, and its role in monitoring pricing outcomes following spectrum assignment and pro-competitive interventions.

2. LEGAL BASIS FOR THE INQUIRY

- 2.1 The legal basis of the inquiry is in terms of section 4B of the ICASA Act, which states the following:

"The Authority must conduct an inquiry into any matter with regard to:

- (a) the achievement of the objects of this Act or underlying statutes;*
- (b) regulations and guidelines made in terms of this Act or the underlying statutes;*
- (c) compliance by applicable person with this Act and the underlying statutes;*
- (d) compliance with the terms and conditions of any licence by the holder of such licence issued pursuant to the underlying statutes; and*
- (e) the exercise and performance of its powers, functions and duties in terms of this Act or the underlying statutes."*

3. THE PURPOSE OF THE INQUIRY

- 3.1. Affordable access to telecommunications services is a critical enabler of digital inclusion, economic participation, education, and service delivery. Despite progress in network coverage and mobile broadband penetration in South Africa, concerns persist regarding the affordability of voice and broadband services, particularly for low-income households, rural communities, youth, and informal sector workers.
- 3.2. The purpose of this Inquiry is to provide an evidence-based, policy-relevant assessment of the affordability of telecommunications services, identifying structural cost drivers, household expenditure impacts, and potential regulatory or market interventions, in terms of section 4B of the ICASA Act.

4. THE INQUIRY PROCESS

- 4.1. The Authority will commence and conduct the review in a series of phases as follows:
- 4.2. Phase 1 (commencement of the market inquiry)
 - 4.2.1. The Authority publishes
 - (a) notice of intention to conduct an inquiry into affordability of telecommunications services, in the *Gazette*; and
 - (b) a questionnaire on affordability of telecommunications services inquiry, on its website.

- 4.2.2. Stakeholders will be given ten (10) working days, from the date of publication of this Notice and the questionnaire, to send any questions of clarity.
- 4.2.3. The Authority will respond to all questions of clarity by publishing a briefing note on its website within ten (10) working days of the final date for submission of clarification questions.
- 4.2.4. Stakeholders are invited to submit written responses to the questionnaire within forty-five (45) working days from the date of publication of the above-mentioned briefing note.

The Authority may request one-on-one meetings in relation to information submitted by a stakeholder, where necessary to clarify information that is submitted.

4.3. Phase 2 (Discussion Document)

- 4.3.1. The Discussion Document will be published for public comment for a period of forty-five (45) working days.
- 4.3.2. Stakeholders may submit written representations on the Discussion Document by the set deadline and must indicate whether they require an opportunity to make oral representations, should the Authority hold public hearings.
- 4.3.3. Written representations on the Discussion Document will be made available for public scrutiny on the Authority's website.

4.4. Phase 3 (Public Hearings on the Discussion Document)

- 4.4.1. The Authority may hold public hearings and confirm details of the hearings in a notice to be published on the Authority's website.

4.4.2. The notice to be published in terms of clause 4.4.1 above will contain the date (s) and the order to which interested persons will be expected to make the oral representations to the Authority.

4.4.3. At the hearings, affected stakeholders may be requested to provide supplementary information, within seven working days.

4.5. Phase 4 (Findings Document)

Within 90 days from the date of conclusion of the Inquiry, the Authority will publish a summary of its findings in the Government Gazette and on the Authority's website.

5. Confidentiality

5.1. Stakeholders may request confidentiality, in terms of section 4D of the ICASA Act, on information submitted to the Authority during this review process.

5.2. Such request for confidentiality must be accompanied by a confidential and non-confidential version of the stakeholder's submission.

5.3. The Authority hereby refers stakeholders to the Guidelines for Confidentiality, published on 17 August 2018 in Gazette No 41839, to assist stakeholders when requesting confidentiality.

All communication relating to this process must be directed to the Chairperson (Affordability Market Inquiry) on affordtelecominquiry@icasa.org.za.