

The Chairperson
Mothibi G. Ramusi
The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
350 Witch-Hazel Avenue,
Eco Point Office Park Eco Park,
Centurion, 0144

Attention:

Mr. Davis Kgosimolao Moshweunyane, dmoshweunyane@icasa.org.za

Mr Manyaapelo Richard Makgotlho, rmakgotlho@icasa.org.za

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CLARIFICATION ON DRM TERMINOLOGY: DRM

Dear Chairperson

The DRM Southern Africa Group (“DRM SA”) would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to make oral representations on Friday, 16 January 2026, and in particular for the constructive engagement during the discussion on the use of DRM-related terminology in the National Radio Frequency Plan (NRFP).

During the session, a question was raised regarding how the Authority should correctly and consistently refer to DRM in the NRFP. After discussing this matter internally, we wish to provide a brief clarification in this regard, aligned with international standards and current DRM Consortium practice.

The Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) system is defined as a single international digital sound broadcasting standard, as specified by the ITU-R and maintained by the DRM Consortium. In all current DRM Consortium literature, including the DRM Handbook v5.1, the standard is referred to simply as “DRM”, without subdivision into separate standards.

Historically, the terms “DRM30” and “DRM+” were used to distinguish between technical parameter sets applicable to transmissions below and above 30 MHz respectively. However, **these terms are no longer used in official DRM standards documentation**, as they may be confusing and could be interpreted as referring to different standards. The DRM Consortium now consistently refers to the system as DRM, irrespective of the frequency band in which it is deployed.

In order to align the NRFP with international standards and best practice, DRM SA respectfully recommends that:

- The term “DRM” be used consistently throughout the NRFP when referring to the Digital Radio Mondiale standard; and
- Where helpful for regulatory clarity, ICASA may include an explanatory footnote along the following lines: *“Historically, the terms ‘DRM30’ and ‘DRM+’ were used to differentiate the technical parameter sets for DRM transmissions below and above 30 MHz, respectively. These terms are no longer used, as DRM is a single international standard applicable across multiple frequency bands.”*

This approach ensures alignment with the DRM Consortium’s standards documentation, avoids ambiguity, and supports the NRFP’s objective of remaining internationally harmonised, technologically neutral, and future-proof.

As part of our mandate to serve as South Africa’s trusted authority on DRM, DRM SA remains available to provide any further technical clarification or supporting material that the Authority may require.

We thank ICASA once again for the opportunity to engage and for the constructive manner in which our submissions have been considered.

Kind regards,



ALDRED DREYER
Chairperson
DRM SA Group
Email: aldred@drmsa.org
Tel: +27 82 459 6149