



**MTN'S RESPONSE IN RELATION TO THE NOTICE
REGARDING THE DRAFT AMENDMENT OF THE
RADIO FREQUENCY SPECTRUM FEES REGULATIONS
2010 PUBLISHED ON GOVERNMENT GAZETTE 54677
DATED 15 MAY 2026**

29 June 2026

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1. Introduction

Mobile Telephone Networks (Pty) Ltd ("MTN") wishes to thank the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa ("the Authority") for the opportunity to comment on the General Notice 3927 of Government Gazette No. 54677 in terms of which the Authority invites comments on the Draft Amendment of the Radio Frequency Spectrum Regulations 2025.

2. General Comments

MTN has noted semantic ambiguities in the use of the following terms throughout the draft amendment document.

- Terminal Network
- VSAT network

In Satellite communications, a VSAT network is communication system where multiple VSAT terminals link to a central hub and the satellite to share data. These multiple devices are interconnected through a central ground-based station to form a particular network topology. To avoid ambiguity, for the purposes of the Radio Frequency Spectrum Regulations MTN suggest that these terms be replaced with "Network Terminal" and "VSAT" to describe individual ground-based terminals (which are not interconnected) used to send and receive data from the satellite.

3. Amendment of regulation 1 of the Regulations

The inclusion of the word "network" in the definition of the term **Blanket Licence** as proposed in the amendment of regulation 1 presents ambiguity. In telecommunication systems, a network refers to multiple terminals that are linked together via another central hub terminal, thereby forming a fully functional bidirectional communication system.

To ensure certainty for the purposes of the Radio Frequency Spectrum Fees regulations, MTN recommends that the term and its definition be rephrased with the as follows:

"Blanket Licence Fee – " A licence fee that covers operation of multiple user terminals or devices provided they meet specified technical and operational standards, without requiring individual licences for each terminal".

4. Amendment of regulation 5 of the Regulations

MTN welcomes the Authority's proposed revision of the Hub ground station Fee and the Network Terminal formulas in the Radio Frequency Spectrum Fees Regulations of 2010.

For Gateway Earth Station, MTN would be supportive of a spectrum fee model that takes into account factors beyond the frequency spectrum band and incorporates geographic coverage area.

It is therefore proposed that the Hub Ground Station Fee formula be replaced with the one below;

$$\text{Hub Ground Station Fee} = \text{Max}(R_{UL}, \text{UNIT} * \text{FREQ} * \text{GEO} * \text{BW} * \text{SEC})$$

The geographic factor (GEO) adjusts spectrum fees based on the population density or economic development of the deployment area. This factor can be set to 1.0 for high demand densely populated major areas and set to 0.1 for rural areas in the country to incentivise broadband infrastructure expansion in the rural areas.

To prevent semantic ambiguity, MTN recommends that the term Terminal Network be rephased to *"Satellite Network Terminal"* when referring to ground-based user terminals used for satellite services access. It is also recommended that *"VSAT networks"* be replaced with VSATs in Regulation 6.

5. Amendment of regulation 9 of the Regulations

MTN welcomes the amendment of regulation 9 of the Radio Frequency Spectrum Licence Fees Regulations. As mentioned above, MTN recommends that term *"Satellite Network Terminal"* be used in the regulations instead of *"Terminal Network"* when referring to ground-based user terminals used for satellite services access.