



METRO FM ANNUAL COMPLI- ANCE REPORT

MARCH 2025

2023/24 BROADCASTING COMPLIANCE ANNUAL REPORT

SOUTH AFRICAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION ("SABC") BROADCASTING AS METRO FM

Licence Period: 18 December 2018 - 17 December 2028

1. PREFACE

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa ("Authority") has a statutory mandate in terms of the Constitution, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act¹ ("ICASA Act"), the Electronic Communications Act² ("ECA") and the Broadcasting Act³ to regulate broadcasting activities in South Africa in the public interest. Among the responsibilities of the Authority is the task to ensure compliance by broadcasting service Licensees with the terms and conditions of their licence and any relevant legislation and/or Regulations.

The purpose of the report is to give an account of Metro FM's compliance with the terms and conditions as set out in its licence for the 2023/2024 financial year. Aspects of compliance that are measured comprise of Format, Local Content Obligations, General Programming Obligations and Training and Skills Development.

Further, the report will measure compliance with Regulations that include South African Music Content, Standard Terms and Conditions for Individual Licensees, Universal Service and Access Fund, General Licence Fee and the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters.

2. BACKGROUND

Metro FM holds an Individual Broadcast Service license from the South African Broadcasting Corporation ("SABC").

¹ Act No. 13 of 2000, as amended

² Act No. 36 of 2005, as amended

³ Act No. 4 of 1999

The licensee's language of broadcast is English. The radio station's mandate is to provide a full radio spectrum service to the urban areas of all nine provinces of South Africa.

3. COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT

3.1. Ownership and Control

Clause 1.1 of the licence stipulates as follows:

"Name of the Company/Entity: The South African Broadcasting Corporation".

Clause 1.2 of the licence stipulates that the shareholders are as follows:

"Shareholders: The State: 100%"

Clause 1.3 of the licence stipulates that:

"Ownership held by persons from historically disadvantaged groups: NA"

Metro FM forms part of the public service of the South African Broadcasting Corporation which is 100% owned by the state.

The Licensee complies with the above clauses.

3.2. Geographic Coverage

Clause 2 of the schedule to Metro FM's licence prescribes that:

"The coverage area is as defined in the map attached to the radio frequency spectrum licence".

According to the frequency spectrum licence, the radio station's coverage areas are Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North-West, Northern Cape, Free State, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo.⁴ The Licensee has confirmed that its footprint has not changed.

The Licensee complies with clause 2 of its licence.

⁴ *Ibid*

3.3. Language

Clause 3 of the schedule to the licence stipulates for Metro FM to broadcast in:

"Principal Language is English".

The Authority's monitoring confirmed that the Licensee's language of broadcast is English

The Licensee complies with clause 3 of its licence.

3.4. Format

Clause 4.1 of the schedule to the licence provides that:

"The service authorised by the licence forms part of the public service division of the Licensee".

Clause 4.2 stipulates that:

"The licensed service shall be a sound broadcasting service in an urban contemporary format".

Metro FM is a commercial radio station of the SABC and offers its audience as outlined in the licence.

The Licensee complies with clauses 4.1 and 4.2 of the schedule of its licence.

3.5. General programming obligations

3.5.1 General

Clause 6.1.1 of the schedule to Metro FM's licence stipulates:

"The Licensee shall ensure that its programming adequately reflects the diversity of South Africa's Religion".

The Licensee's editorial policy provides that:

"Religious programmes should take account of the regional factors, target audiences, language and cultural preferences, and the devotional needs of specific groups".

The Licensee broadcasts a drive-time programme called "The Touchdown" with a religious segment known as *Replenish Thursdays* on Thursdays between 15h00 and 18h00. The show features inspirational talks by studio guests from various

churches, as well as gospel music and inspirational music both local and international.

The Licensee also broadcasts a religious programme called “*Sacred Space*” with Thami Ngubeni on Sunday mornings between 06h00 and 09h00. The show also invites listeners to call and share their stories, challenges and how they use the power of prayer to overcome challenges in their personal lives.

The Licensee complies with clause 6.1.1 of its licence.

Clause 6.1.3 of the schedule to Metro FM’s licence reads that:

“The Licensee shall during the performance period, provide programme material that caters and has due regard for the interests of all sectors of South African society and shall provide programming on health-related issues, gender issues relevant to all age groups”.

“*The Bridge*” is a variety show, from 09h00 until 12h00 on weekdays (Monday until Friday). The show covers a wide range of topical issues such as lifestyle, health-related issues, financial education as well as career and personal wellness among others. The programme allows for phone in participation by listeners.

“*Metro FM talk with Faith Mangope*” is a current affairs show broadcast from 19h30 until 21h00 on Mondays and Thursdays. The show covers a wide range of topical issues such as Nation Building, Social Cohesion, rural development along with contemporary content around the African Continent. The programme allows for phone in participation by listeners”.

The Licensee complies with clause 6.1.3 of the schedule to its licence.

3.5.2 News and Current Affairs

Clause 6.2.1 of the schedule to Metro FM’s licence stipulates:

“The Licensee shall broadcast at least 30 minutes of News per day during the South African Performance Period”.

The monitoring exercise conducted for the period under review revealed that Metro FM broadcasts news bulletins every hour on the hour and headlines every half hour daily, mornings as well as afternoons. The duration of the news bulletins

is between three (3) and five (5) minutes. This adds up to a total exceeding 30 minutes each day of news during the South African performance period.

Among the news stories covered were excerpts from some newscasts, as follows:

- *"ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa says the unauthorized leaking of the party's candidate lists for the upcoming elections is unfortunate, however, he remains confident in the Electoral Commission to manage the electoral process. The list, which includes personal information of the party's national and provincial candidates, started making the rounds on social media on Friday, a short while after the ANC's submission to the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).*
- *"The Electoral Court says the African National Congress (ANC) failed to follow proper guidelines in opposing the registration of uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) Part as a political formation. The governing party failed in its bid to have the MK Party deregistered and removed from the election ballot".*
- *It is a race against time for the remaining 47 construction workers trapped under the rubble of a collapsed building in George. Seventy-five construction employees were on site when the multi-storey apartment complex collapsed on Monday. Six people have been declared dead so far.*

The Licensee complies with clauses 6.2.1 of the schedule to its licence.

Clause 6.2.2 of the schedule to Metro FM's licence stipulates:

"The Licensee shall in the production of its news and current affairs programming:

- i. Exercise full editorial control in respect of the contents of such programming;*
- ii. Include matters of national, regional, international and where appropriate, local significance;*
- iii. Meet the highest standards of journalistic professionalism'*
- iv. Provide fair, unbiased, impartial and balanced coverage independent from Governmental, commercial or other interference; and*
- v. Provide a reasonable opportunity for the public to receive a variety of points of view on matters of public concern".*

The Licensee's editorial policies indicate that the Licensee exercises full editorial control with respect to the contents of its programming. The editorial policies further indicate that the Licensee endeavours to meet the highest standards of journalistic professionalism. Furthermore, it provides fair, unbiased and impartial coverage independent from government, commercial or other interference.

During the period under review, the monitoring exercise revealed that Metro FM broadcasts matters of regional, national and international significance.

The Licensee complies with clause 6.2.2 of the schedule to its licence.

3.6 Training and Skills Development Obligations

Clause 7 of the schedule to the Metro FM's licence stipulates that:

- 7.1 *"The Licensee must adopt and implement equal opportunity employment Practice.*
- 7.2 *The Licensee must ensure that its management and staff are representative of South African society and that its human resource policies take into account the development of managerial, production, technical and other skills and expertise, particularly with regard to the historically disadvantaged persons.*
- 7.3 *The Licensee shall endeavour to achieve fair and reasonable participation by historically disadvantaged persons with respect to:*
 - (a) its management and control structures*
 - (b) skills development*
 - (c) enterprise development; and*
 - (d) procurement*

The Licensee's commitment to a skilled and trained workforce is evident in its efforts to provide development for its employees. The SABC's Annual Skills and Development Report 2023/2024 shows that bursaries, which were previously only reserved for employees identified by the Licensee's 2019/2020 Skills Audit, were now extended to all SABC employees.

In the year under review, the Licensee facilitated at least one thousand and ninety-one (1091) training interventions; this is in response to one thousand two

hundred and seventeen (1217) training needs identified in its Workplace Skills Plan for the year ended.

At least nine hundred and twenty-three (923) individuals received training, and ninety-nine percent (99%) of the training recipients were people from previously disadvantaged groups.

The Licensee continues to prioritise the employment of women and Black people.

Women continue to serve in high-level positions within the Licensee, and people from previously disadvantaged groups still make up the majority at the executive level.

The analysis of the Licensee’s Employment Equity report shows a decline in the occupancy of Black people within the Licensee’s Board of Directors for the year under review. However, this cannot be seen as indicating a decrease in the Licensee’s efforts to maximise the presence of Historically Disadvantaged Individuals in its executive. The year ended March 2024 saw the Licensee left with around sixty-six percent (66%) of Black People at the Executive Level, a decline of around nineteen percent (19%) from last year’s reporting.

The Licensee has already reached its 2025 Employment Equity target; currently, Historically Disadvantaged Individuals make up the majority at levels.

Table 1: SABC’s 2025 Employment Equity Targets (Control/Management Echelon) against 2023 Actuals.

Employment Category	September 2025 Target	February 2023 Actual	March 2024 Actual
Black Board of Directors with Voting Rights	50%	85.72%	66.6%
Female Board of Directors with Voting Rights	25%	33%	33.3%
Black Executive Directors (GCEO, COO, CFO)	50%	66.67%	33.3%
Black Female Executive Directors (GCEO, COO, CFO)	25%	0%	33.3%

Employment Category	September 2025 Target	February 2023 Actual	March 2024 Actual
Black Executive Managers / Senior Management	60%	88 %	74.1%
Black Female Executive Managers/Senior Management	30%	32%	38.7%
Black Middle Management	75%	83%	71.2%
Black Female Middle Management	38%	42%	36.2%
Black Junior Managers	88%	93%	81.9%
Black Female Junior Managers	44%	49%	42%
Black People with Disabilities	2%	2%	2.5%

The Licensee complies with the entirety of clause 7 of the Schedule of its Licence.

3.8 Provisions of Audited Financial Statements

Clause 8 of the schedule to Metro FM’s licence stipulates that:

"The Licensee shall provide the Authority with the audited annual financial statements of the licensed service within four (4) months of the end of the licensee’s financial year, provided that the licensee may on good ground shown apply to the Authority for extension".

The Licensee submitted its Audited Financial Statements for the 2023/2024 financial year within the stipulated timeframe.

The Licensee has complied with clause 8 of the schedule to its licence.

4. REGULATIONS

4.1. South African Content Music Regulations⁵

Regulation 3(2) of the Regulations on South African Music Content as published on 23 March 2016 provides that:

"Every holder of a commercial sound broadcasting licence must ensure that after eighteen (18) months from the date of gazetting of these Regulations, a minimum of 35% of the musical works broadcast in the performance period consist of South African music and that such South African music is spread reasonably evenly throughout the said period" (Regulations on South African Music Content attached as Attachment C).

The monitoring exercise has verified that throughout the review period, the Licensee consistently broadcasts a significant portion of South African music, amounting to no less than forty percent (40%) of the total music content aired. This commitment reflects the Licensee's dedication to promoting local artists and enriching the cultural landscape with a diverse selection of South African music.

The radio station interviewed artists such as Aymos, Tyler, Nkosazana Daughter among others. The station covered live music events such as SAMA Awards, KORA and Metro Awards encompassing music genres such as Scathamiya, Amapiano, Kwaito, Jazz, Afro-Pop, House, RnB, Rock, Gospel and cultural music.

The Licensee complies with the South African Content Music Regulations.

4.2. Standard Terms and Conditions

During the year under review, the Authority did not identify any non-compliance by the Licensee with the standard terms and conditions for individual Licensees.

The Licensee complies with the South African Content Music Regulations.

⁵ Appendix G: ICASA South African Music Content Regulations, 2016 as published in *Government Gazette* No. 39844 dated, 23 March 2016.

4.3. Universal Service and Access Fund Regulations ⁶

Regulation 3 of the USAF Regulations stipulates that:

- (1) *“Every holder of a licence granted in terms of Chapters 3, 4 and/or 9 or converted in terms of Chapter 15 of the Act, must pay an annual contribution of 0.2% of its Annual Turnover to the Fund”.*
- (2) *“A Broadcasting Service Licensee who has paid an annual contribution to the MDDA must set off that contribution against its USAF Contribution, provided that the MDDA contribution and the USAF contribution against which it is set off are for the same financial year”.*

The Licensee made the prescribed payment directly to the MDDA and submitted proof thereof to the Authority.

The Licensee has complied with the USAF Regulations.

4.5. Compliance Procedure Manual – Form 12A

The Licensee is required, in terms of the Compliance Procedure Manual Regulations, to submit a Form 12A⁷ which reports on all complaints received in the course of each financial year. In April 2018, the SABC submitted its complaints report in accordance with the Regulations regarding the Code of Conduct for Broadcasting Service Licensees.

The Licensee is a member of the National Association of Broadcasters (“NAB”) and complaints in relation to the Code of Conduct by Broadcasters are administered by the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (“BCCSA”).

The Licensee complies with the Compliance Procedure Manual Regulations.

⁶ Appendix H: General Licence Fees Regulations, 2012 as published in *Government Gazette* No. 36323 dated, 28 March 2013, as amended

⁷ Appendix E: ICASA Compliance Procedure Manual Regulations, 2011 as published in *Government Gazette* No. 34863 dated, 15 December 2011. (Form 12A: ECN/S and BS Complaints Reporting)

5. CONCLUSION

The Licensee has fully complied with its licence terms and conditions, for the period under review.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Appendix A: Service and Frequency spectrum licences

Appendix B: Editorial policies

Appendix C: SABC Employment Equity and Transformation: Report to
ICASA, Reporting period: 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

Appendix D: Skills and Development Report

Appendix E: South African Music Content Regulations

Appendix F: Compliance Procedure Manual Regulations

Appendix G: Regulations Regarding Standard Terms and Conditions

Appendix H: Universal Service Obligation Fund Regulations