



**THE SOUTH AFRICAN
BROADCASTING
CORPORATION**

as

TRU FM

**ANNUAL COMPLIANCE
REPORT**

MARCH 2025

2023/2024 ANNUAL COMPLIANCE REPORT

The SABC BROADCASTING AS TRU FM

Licence Period: 18 December 2018 - 17 December 2028

3. 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 Act (“ICASA Act”)¹, 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 of ensuring compliance by broadcasting service licensees with the terms and conditions of their licence and any relevant legislation and/or regulations.

The intention behind the commissioning of this report is to measure the extent of TRU FM’s compliance with the terms and conditions as set out in its license⁴ for the 2023/2024 financial year. Furthermore, this report will monitor TRU FM’s compliance with the following regulations: 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.

¹ Act No. 13 of 2000, as amended

² Act No. 36 of 2000

³ Act No. 4 of 1999

⁴ TRU FM’s Broadcasting Service Licence

4. BACKGROUND

The SABC holds an Individual Sound Broadcasting Service licence which provides service as TRU FM for an Urban Contemporary Music format to East London, King Williams Town and Queenstown.

3. COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT

3.1. Geographic Coverage Area

Clause 3 of TRU FM's schedule to the licence provides that the Licensee's coverage area is as stated below.

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

TRU FM's frequency spectrum licence⁵ provides that the radio station covers the following areas: East London, King Williams Town and Queenstown. The SABC confirms that its coverage area is as defined in its frequency spectrum licence for TRU FM. In the year that this report seeks to review, the Authority did not receive any complaints alleging that the Licensee is in contravention of its frequency spectrum licence.

The Licensee complies with clause 3 of the schedule of its licence.

3.2. Language(s)

Clause 4 of TRU FM's schedule to the licence provides that the Licensee's language of broadcast shall be:

"Principal Language: 60% English and 40% isiXhosa".

A monitoring exercise carried out on the Licensee's programme recordings found that the main languages of broadcast on TRU FM are indeed English and isiXhosa, with English dominating the schedule.

⁵ TRU FM's Frequency Spectrum Licence

The Licensee complies with clause 4 of the schedule of its licence.

3.3 Format

Clause [5].1 of the schedule to the licence stipulates that:

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

Clause [5].2 adds that:

"The licensed service shall provide a service with an Urban Contemporary Music Format".

TRU FM's programming profile continues to carry the SABC's mandate on this obligation. The Licensee – through TRU FM- is a public radio station that offers a full-spectrum service with an Urban Contemporary Music format to its audience, as outlined in the licence.

The Licensee complies with clauses 5.1 and 5.2 of its licence.

3.4 Local Content Obligations

Clause 6 of the schedule to the licence provides as follows:

"In each licence year, the Licensee shall, within thirty (30) days of end of the quarter, submit to the Authority written records indicating the extent of:

6.1 different genres; and

6.2 South African Music Content, in programme material broadcast on the licensed service during that quarter, in each instance, distinguishing between genres, providing the relevant details in relation to prime time and the period between 05h00 and 23h00 daily ("the South African broadcast period"), and expressing relevant details both as an aggregate in minutes and as a percentage of the total of all such programming material".

The SABC submitted all its quarterly reports as instructed by clause 6 of its licence and the Compliance Procedure Manual Regulations.

TRU FM complies with clause 6 of the schedule to the licence.

3.5 GENERAL PROGRAMMING OBLIGATIONS

Hereon further, this report will measure the Licensee's monitored compliance against that which the SABC submitted as their output on TRU FM. The basis for the Authority's measurement is the Licensee's programme recordings for the two weeks ending on Sunday, 18 February 2024.

3.5.1 General

Clause 7.1.1 of the schedule to the licence stipulates that:

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

The SABC's editorial policy⁶ makes the following provision:

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

TRU FM's religious programming was identified as reflecting the religions of the isiXhosa-speaking community in the Eastern Cape and is mostly based on Christianity.

While monitoring TRU FM's programming profile, the Authority found the following programmes which contained religious content that is suited for the isiXhosa-speaking community.

- *"Hlalani Kum Nam ndihlale kuni"* broadcast from Monday to Thursday in the three hours starting 19h00 until 22h00.

⁶ An Extract form the Licensee's Editorial Policy

- "Isingqi seZulu" goes to air on Sundays between 06h00 and 09h00 and is a gospel music show which features local and international gospel musicians.

TRU FM complies with clause 7.1.1 of the schedule to its licence.

Clause 7.1.2 of the schedule to the licence stipulates that:

"The Licensee shall take reasonable steps to provide programming that reflects the cultural and traditional needs of its audience".

The Authority's monitoring exercise found that TRU FM's programming carries content that is reflective of the cultures and traditions of the people living in the Eastern Cape.

TRU FM, as an Urban Contemporary Music radio station, is more of a music than a talk radio station. The Licensee's music selection caters for the different cultures and traditions in the Eastern Cape community. Not a lot of topics within shows that carry much of either cultural or traditional content. However, seasonal topics/advice around certain aspects of culture and traditions were found in different shows during monitoring.

TRU FM complies with clause 7.1.2 of the schedule to the licence.

Clause 7.1.3 of the schedule to the licence stipulates that:

"The Licensee shall, during the South African 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".

In the year that this report seeks to review, the monitoring exercise found that the Licensee's programming profile caters for the interests of all sectors of the South African society within the Eastern Cape community. The following programmes were identified to cater for all sectors of South

African society and featured programmes on health and gender-related issues relevant to all age groups:

- *"The Chase"* – a Monday to Friday breakfast show that tackles a lot of issues affecting communities today. Topics relating to different sectors of society such as ulwaluko (seasonal initiation of young boys into manhood) to effects of the consumer price index on modern-day living. This show is a two-hour and thirty-minute offering between 06h30 and 09h00.
- *"Incoko"* – every weekday 30-minute insert between 18h30 and 19h00. This show tackles different lifestyle and everyday life issues. The topics offered would cater for different sectors in that the show is not focused on just one sector of society.
- *"A2Zee"* – catering and carrying educational content for children was identified between 15h00 and 17h00 on Saturdays. All aspects of growing up from the classroom to being a teenager were identified as topical issues during this programme.
- *"Hlalani Kum, Nam ndihlale kuni"* – catering and carrying content that addresses Christian believers of all ages and physical orientations.

The Licensee complies with clause 7.1.3 of its licence

3.5.2 News and Current Affairs

Clause 7.2.1 of the schedule to the licence stipulates that:

"The Licensee shall broadcast at least sixty (60) minutes of news programming each day during the South African performance period".

The SABC's quarterly reports submit that TRU FM broadcasts at least sixty-eight (68) minutes of news each day during the South African performance period.

The Authority's monitoring exercise found that the Licensee broadcasts at least 14 news bulletins between 06h00 and 19h00 every day during the

week. Each news bulletin was observed to be around 5 minutes long including salutations, thus totalling 70 minutes of news per day during weekdays. TRU FM's news scheduling changes over the weekend with just 12 news bulletins at 5 minutes each. The Licensee's news output is 60 minutes of news per day over the weekend. All news bulletins were presented during the South African Performance Period.

The Licensee complies with clause 7.2.1 of its licence.

Among the news stories covered for the period under review were excerpts from certain broadcasts, as follows:

- *"As the 5:00 PM deadline approaches for political parties and independents to submit candidate nominations, the IEC is facing a court challenge requesting an extension. The newly formed Labour Party which originates from the Labour Union AMCU, will argue in the Gauteng High Court that candidates need more time. [A cross over to a prerecorded interview with the IEC's Chief Electoral Officer, Sy Mamabolo.]*
- *Two British nationals have been arrested in Cape Town on drug related charges in their home country. The Western Cape NPA's spokesperson, Eric Ntabazalila, says the charges against the woman and her son include conspiracy to supply drugs in the UK. HE says the son fled to South Africa before the arrest, while the mother fled after being released on bail. The son also faces charges of possessing a fake firearm and assault. Ntabazalila says an extradition request has been made for the two and they are expected to appear in Court today.*
- *The DA has confirmed that it will lay criminal charges of corruption against Deputy President, Paul Mashatile, at the Cape Town Central Police Station. This follows media reports implicating Mashatile in corruption during his tenure as the Gauteng Human Settlements MEC. Earlier this month, DA Leader, John Steenhuisen handed a dossier containing corruption allegations against Mashatile to President Ramaphosa. Steenhuisen elaborates [a crossover to a prerecorded interview with DA's John Steenhuisen].*

- *The community of Ennerdale, south of Johannesburg has blamed the death of a Grade 8 Learner from Oakdale Secondary school on the increase of gangsterism in the area. The fourteen (14) year old learner was stabbed to death yesterday morning just outside the school following an alleged altercation with another learner. A Grade Ten learner has also been injured in the incident and is in hospital. Police are investigating the circumstances surrounding the incident. Community Activist and former learner, Mpho Armstrong, says gangsterism in schools in the area is getting out of control. [Crossover to a live recording with Mpho Armstrong].*

Clause 7.2.2 of the schedule to the licence stipulates that:

"The Licensee shall broadcast at least thirty (30) minutes of current affairs programming each day during the South African performance period".

The Licensee's quarterly reports suggest that the radio station broadcasts at least fifty-one (51) minutes of Current Affairs Programming each day (on average), during the South African performance period.

The Authority's monitoring exercise found that TRU FM schedules at least 390 minutes of Current Affairs programming per week. This then translates to a daily (each day on average) output of fifty-five (55) minutes of Current Affairs Programming.

The monitoring exercise found the following Current Affairs programming:

- *Thirty Minutes Live*: During weekdays between Monday and Friday at 11h30 until 12h00.
- *TRU News at Six*: During weekdays between Monday and Thursday at 18h00 until 18h30.
- *Interchange*: On Saturdays between 06h00 and 06h30;
- *News Review*: On Sundays between 17h00 and 18h00.

The Licensee complies with clause 7.2.2 of its licence.

Clause 7.2.3 of the licence stipulates that:

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

- i. Exercise full editorial control in respect of contents of such programming;*
- ii. Include matters of international, national, regional 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 SABC’s editorial policies echo the provisions of this clause. The Licensee’s policies also prescribe that the Licensee exercises full editorial control in respect of the contents of its programming. The editorial policies demonstrate that the SABC endeavours to meet the highest standards of journalistic professionalism.

During the period under review, the monitoring exercise found that TRU FM offers its overall news and current affairs programming in a fair and biased manner. The monitoring exercise could not detect any signs of undue influence on the TRU FM’s news and current affairs programming.

The monitoring exercise found that TRU FM’s news and current affairs programmes include matters relating to the whole world including the Licensee’s coverage area. In its broadcast of current affairs programming, the Licensee provides an opportunity for the public to receive a variety of points of view on matters of public concern.

The Licensee complies with clause 7.2.2 and clause 7.2.3 of the schedule to its licence.

3.5.1 Programming Targeted at Children

Clause 7.3.1 of the schedule to the licence stipulates that:

"The Licensee shall in the provision of the licensed service, broadcast at least thirty (30) minutes of programming targeted at children (as contemplated in section 10 (1) (g) of the Broadcasting Act) per week during the South African performance period".

Clause 7.3.2 of the schedule to the licence stipulates that:

"In the production and presentation of its children's programming, the Licensee shall ensure that such children's programming is:

- (i) broadcast at times of the day when children are available to listen;*
- (ii) targeted at and appropriate for children between the ages of nought (0) to six (6) years and seven (7) to twelve (12) years respectively;*
- (iii) educational and is made from children's point of view".*

The Licensee's quarterly submission indicates that TRU FM broadcasts at least thirty (30) minutes of children's programming per week during the South African performance period.

A monitoring exercise carried out on the Licensee's programming profile found that the Licensee broadcasts at least 60 minutes of children's programming per week during the South African Performance period. A programme called the "Playroom" (an insert during the breakfast show) was identified between 08h00 and 09h00 on Saturdays and its contents were found to be speaking to children. The programme is part of SABC Education and features characters known to children from the Sanlam and SABC Education initiatives.

TRU FM complied with clause 7.3.1 and clause 7.3.2 of the schedule of its licence.

3.5.2 Educational Programming

Clause 7.4 of the schedule to the licence stipulates that:

“The Licensee shall broadcast at least two (2) hours of educational programming (as contemplated in section 10 (1) (e) of the Broadcasting Act) per week within the South African performance period”.

TRU FM’s programming log sheets indicate that the Licensee schedules approximately seven (7) hours of educational programming, per week, during the South African performance period.

A monitoring exercise carried out on the Licensee’s programming profile for the year under review found that TRU FM broadcasts approximately seven hundred and twenty (720) minutes – translating to twelve (12) hours – of educational programming per week during the South African performance period.

The following programmes were identified to carry Educational Programming content:-

- *TRUBreakfast*: Broadcast every day during the week between 05h00 and 08h00. The show has a 60-minute insert that focuses on farming and agricultural information and education.
- *Incoko*: a thirty (30) minute offering between 18h30 and 19h00 from Monday to Thursday.
- *The Chase*: an hour-long insert between 08h00 and 09h00 on Saturdays.
- *A2Zee*: a three-hour lifestyle show between 15h00 and 18h00 addressing the educational needs of children and teenagers alike.
- broadcast on Saturdays between 08h00 and 09h00.
- *UpSkill*: a Sunday offering that plays in the hour between 21h00 and 22h00.

The Licensee complies with clause 7.4 of its licence.

3.5.3 Informal Knowledge Building Programmes

Clause 7.6 of TRU FM's broadcasting service licence provides as follows:

"The Licensee shall broadcast at least one (1) hour of informal knowledge-building programming per week within the South African performance period".

According to the SABC's reports for the year under review, TRU FM aired an average weekly output of at least 22 hours of Informal Knowledge Building programming per week during the South African performance period.

The Authority's monitoring exercise found that TRU FM carries at least thirty-four (34) hours of Informal knowledge-building programming during the South African performance period.

The following IKB programmes were found during monitoring:

- *"Ezolimo"*: a 60-minute offering during the Breakfast Show from Monday to Friday.
- *"Lunchtime Shandis"*: is a daily offering which goes to air from 12h00 until 15h00 between Mondays and Fridays.
- *"Incoko"*: broadcast daily from Monday to Thursday between 18h30 and 19h00.
- *"The Night Cap"*: the hour between 22h00 and 23thh00 from Monday to Thursday and then again on Sunday.
- *"The Chase"*: 06h30 until 09h00 on Saturdays.
- *"Isingqi seZulu"*: Sundays between 06h00 and 09h00.
- *"The Sunday Cruise"*: Sundays between 15h00 and 17h00.

The Licensee complies with clause 7.4 of the schedule of its licence.

3.6 Training and Skills Development Obligations

Clause [8] of the schedule attached to the licence stipulates as follows:

[8].1 "The licensee must adopt and implement equal opportunity employment practices

[8].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;

[8].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*

[8].4 The Licensee must, within thirty (30) days of the end of each financial year, provide the Authority with written information regarding its compliance with the above requirements".

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 boasts that bursaries, 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; 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 an 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 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 all levels.

Table 1: SABC’s 2025 Employment Equity Targets (Control/Management Echelon) measured against the last two financial years’ progress.

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%

Employment Category	September 2025 Target	February 2023 Actual	March 2024 Actual
Black Female Executive Directors (GCEO, COO, CFO)	25%	0%	33.3%
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 SABC complies with its training and skills development obligations per the licence.

3.7 Provision of Audited Financial statements to the Authority

Clause 9 of the licence stipulates that:

"The Licensee shall provide the Authority with the audited annual financial statements of the licensed service within six (6) months of the end of the

licensee's financial year, provided that the licensee may on good cause apply to the Authority for extension".

The Licensee submitted its audited annual financial statements.

The Licensee complied with clause 9 of the schedule to its licence.

4. REGULATIONS

4.1 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. The SABC submitted its complaints report in accordance with the Compliance Procedure Manual Regulations.

According to the above-mentioned submission, there have been no complaints received against TRU FM in the year that ended March 2023.

4.2 ICASA South African Music Content Regulations

Regulation 3 of the ICASA South African Music Content Regulations 2016⁸ stipulates that:

"A holder of a public sound broadcasting licence must ensure that after eighteen (18) months from the date of gazetting of these Regulations, a minimum of 60%, increasing to 70% in the following year, of the musical works broadcast in the performance period, consist of South African music and that such South African music is spread evenly throughout the performance period."

TRU FM's music playlist is dominated by South African musicians. Their music content measured over an average 3-hour show, is made up of approximately 75% South African Music. The music artists who enjoy airtime on TRU FM's music playlist are amongst others: Makhadzi, DJ Maphorisa, Nasty C, Amy Faku, Prince KB, Nomcebo Zikode, Sjava, Master KG, Nandi Mngoma, Casper Nyovest, Proverb, AKA, Ricky Rick, Thandiswa

⁷ SABC Form 12A

⁸ ICASA South African Music Content Regulations

Mazwai, Busiswa, Big Zulu, Mafikizolo, Something Soweto, Micasa, Lebo Sekgobela, Malibongwe Gcwabe, Kelly Khumalo, Hlengiwe Mhlaba, Amadodana aseWesile, Sifiso Ncwane and many other artists whose music ticks the “*South African Music Content*” box requirements.

TRU FM complies with Regulation 3 of the South African Music Content Regulations.

4.4 Standard Terms and Conditions for individual broadcasting licences

Regulation 11 (3) of the standard terms and conditions⁹ stipulates that:

“A station must clearly identify itself at intervals of not more than thirty (30) minutes.”

The Licensee’s jingles/announcements were identified frequently during the period under review and these broadcasts were at intervals of not more than ten (10) minutes apart. The jingles/announcements always carried the name and frequency location of the Licensee. Furthermore, no non-compliance was detected by the Authority with the standard terms and conditions for individual licences.

TRU FM complies with the regulations on standard terms and conditions for individual licensees.

4.5 Universal Service and Access Fund Regulations

Regulation 3 of the USAF Regulations¹⁰ 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 BS licensee who has paid an annual contribution to the MDDA must set off that contribution against its USAF Contribution,*

⁹ Regulations regarding the Standard Terms and Conditions for Individual Licensee’s

¹⁰ Universal Service and Access Fund Regulations

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 and submitted proof thereof to the Authority.

The Licensee complies with Regulation 3 of the USAF Regulations.

5. CONCLUSION

The TRU FM has satisfactorily complied with all its licence terms and conditions and has observed all regulations as indicated in this report.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Appendix A: TRU FM’s Broadcasting Service Licence

Appendix B: TRU FM’s Frequency Spectrum Licence

Appendix C: SABC Editorial Policy (An extract)

Appendix D: SABC’s Employment Equity Report

Appendix E: SABC’s Skills and Development Report

Appendix F: SABC’s Form 7C

Appendix G: SABC’s Form 12A

Appendix H: Local Content Regulations

Appendix I: Standard Terms and Conditions Regulations

Appendix J: Universal Service and Access Fund Regulations