



UNIFIED LICENSING FRAMEWORK

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY

November 2020

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA

Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	2
2.	OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIFIED LICENSING FRAMEWORK	2
3.	LICENSE CATEGORIES	3
3.1.	Communications Infrastructure Provider (CIP) License	3
3.2.	Applications and Services Provider (ASP) License	3
3.3.	Communications Infrastructure and Services Provider (CISP) License.....	4
4.	DESCRIPTION OF LICENSE TYPES IN THE CATEGORY OF COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDER (CIP)	4
4.1.	International Communications Infrastructure Provider License.....	4
4.2.	National Communications Infrastructure Provider License	4
4.3.	Regional Communications Infrastructure Providers	4
5.	DESCRIPTION OF LICENSE TYPES OF APPLICATIONS AND SERVICES PROVIDER (ASP) LICENSES	5
5.1.	Applications and Service License.....	5
5.2.	Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO) License	5
6.	CLASS LICENSES	5
6.1.	Terminal Equipment Providers.....	5
6.2.	Private Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT)	5
6.3.	Onetime Authorization (Class License)	5
7.	SUMMARY OF LICENSING CATEGORIES.....	6
8.	EFFECTIVE DATE.....	6
	ANNEX 1: LICENSE CATEGORIES, FEES AND DURATION	7

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Communications Authority (NCA) intends to implement a new ICT licensing framework in pursuit of its mandate as the supervisor of the communication services in the Federal Republic of Somalia. The new licensing framework is guided by the National Communications Law of 2017, which confers powers to issue licenses for the provision and operation of communications infrastructure and services within the borders of the Federal Republic of Somalia to the NCA. The main relevant specific provisions in the Communications Law are in Articles 3(1) and 41(1). The Communication Law also stipulates in Article 2(2a) that one of the main objectives of the Law is the facilitation and unification of communications services.

Hence deriving its authority in the relevant specific provisions in the Communications Law and the requirement for facilitation and unification of services in Article 2, the NCA hereby proposes to adopt Unified Licensing Framework (ULF) in the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Unified licensing embraces the principle of technology and service neutrality. It permits a licensee to offer multiple services, using any technology or infrastructure that is capable of delivering the desired services. The ULF will replace the existing grandfathered technology and service specific licenses, which were previously issued by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications Technology.

ULF offers more flexible, simplified and technology and service neutral form of licensing. It allows operators to use the most cost-effective technologies for their service offerings without exceeding the scope of their licenses. Simplification and streamlining of the licensing process reduce administrative costs for the NCA while lowering or containing levies on operators for licenses and other fees.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIFIED LICENSING FRAMEWORK

The purpose of the UL framework is to simplify the licensing process and provide a more conducive environment for market growth and improvement of the socio-economic welfare of the society while considering the convergence of technologies. The framework will primarily achieve the following:

Efficiency of Convergence: multiple services would be delivered on single network or platform embracing convergence of networks, services and technologies. This factor will drive efficient use of networks through economies of scope;

Technology Neutrality: networks will not be distinguished by technology; rather they would be licensed as networks capable of delivering multiple and multimedia products;

Service Neutrality: no preference is given to any particular type of service or technology, while ensuring the use of common standards and protocols that enable interoperability; and

Consumer Choice: as more players and more applications and products are introduced in the market, consumers will be able to shop for suitable solutions.

3. LICENSE CATEGORIES

Under the UL Framework, the NCA will issue technology and service neutral licenses to ICT/telecommunications network operators and service providers in the Federal Republic of Somalia. The proposed ULF is classified into Individual Licenses and Class Licenses:

3.1. Communications Infrastructure Provider (CIP) License

This type of license shall be issued to licensees who own, operate or provide any form of physical infrastructure used principally for carrying service and applications and content. The infrastructure may include fixed links, radio communication transmitters, satellites and satellites station, submarine cable, fiber/copper cable, towers, and switches, base stations. The facilities are for own use or for availing to other licensed operators on commercial basis. Private telecommunications networks shall fall in this category and shall further be specified in the appropriate license type to distinguish them from major networks.

3.2. Applications and Services Provider (ASP) License

The ASP license is for non-infrastructure-based service providers who could provide all forms of services and applications to end users using infrastructure of Communication Infrastructure Providers. The services and applications may be based on speech, sound, data, text and images and deliver functions to the end users. The services may include among others voice services, Internet Access, data services, mobile money services, MNVO services, IPTV and Value-

Added Services. These service application providers typically use leased facilities from Communications Infrastructure Providers to offer services.

3.3. Communications Infrastructure and Services Provider (CISP) License

This license category allows operators to obtain combined license for communications infrastructure, services, and applications in one license. It is essentially a license that give a licensee combined CIP and ASP license. This type of license eliminates the need for operators to go through multiple licensing procedures if they desire to provide multiple communications infrastructure and applications and services. Terms and conditions for this license will include all the terms and conditions for individual CIP and ASP Licenses.

4. DESCRIPTION OF LICENSE TYPES IN THE CATEGORY OF COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDER (CIP)

4.1. International Communications Infrastructure Provider License

The licensee or service provider has international scope of operation only and shall be licensed to provide network facilities for connectivity to destinations outside Somalia. International network facility will be connected to national network facility to facilitate seamless connectivity and conveyance of services, applications and content. The Terms and Conditions of the license will stipulate further details of operation; for instance, the licensee may provide only wholesale communication infrastructure which means they would only sell to other licensees, who will in turn sell to end users.

4.2. National Communications Infrastructure Provider License

A licensee with this type of license has national scope of operation and may connect to the infrastructure of International Communications Infrastructure Provider if there is need for connectivity to destinations outside Somalia. The Terms and Conditions of the License will stipulate further details of operation, for instance, the license may be licensed to sell to other licensees or to retail consumers.

4.3. Regional Communications Infrastructure Providers

The service provider is licensed to build local networks or own private network. A local network shall be confined to a city, town or village if it is meant to serve the public. Otherwise it shall be confined to ownership and use by a business/company (i.e. Private Network). Non-private network Licensees could provide wholesale or retail connectivity.

The Terms and Conditions of the License will stipulate further details of operation, for instance, the license may be licensed to sell to other licensees or to retail consumers

5. DESCRIPTION OF LICENSE TYPES OF APPLICATIONS AND SERVICES PROVIDER (ASP) LICENSES

5.1. Applications and Service License

This license type defines the services and applications to be carried in communications infrastructure and covers among others voice, data, Internet, SMS, IPTV and value-added services. GMPCS services fall in this license type. Licensee can operate at both national and international scope. However, licensees who seek to provide services to other licensed operators only are issued wholesale application and service license, which shall then define the wholesale application and service.

5.2. Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO) License

This license type is specifically designed to accommodate a network operator that offers mobile services but does not own infrastructure or its own radio frequency, it leases radio access from its hosting Mobile Network Operators (MNO). MVNO operates through commercial arrangements with licensed Mobile Network Operators.

6. CLASS LICENSES

6.1. Terminal Equipment Providers

This class license is classified into:

- a) Class A: Big companies who manufacture and distribute Telecommunications terminal equipment's, installations and Maintenance.
- b) Class B: Small companies who resells Telecommunications terminal equipment's, installations and Maintenance.

6.2. Private Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT)

This class license includes the VSAT operated through foreign hub operators.

6.3. Onetime Authorization (Class License)

This is a onetime authorization class license; it includes the Global mobile Personal Communications by satellite and dot SO sub domain name registrar service providers.

7. SUMMARY OF LICENSING CATEGORIES

License Category	License Type	Services
Individual License		
Communications Infrastructure Provider (CIP)	International Communications Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International gateway (Satellite/Terrestrial) - Cable transit - Satellite Hub System - Uplink Satellite Broadcasting Stations
	National Communications Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Fixed Systems - Public Land and Mobile Cellular Systems
	Regional Communications Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broadcasting Signal Distributor - Public Internet Networks - Public Radio Trunking Systems - Local Loop Networks (Fixed and wireless access systems) - Private Networks
Applications and Services Provider (ASP)	Applications and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All services and applications carried over networks - Internet Service Provider (ISP) - International Services (voice/data/text) - VOIP services - GMPCS services - Satellite services - Resale: Mobile, leased circuit - Other value-added services
	Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobile services
Communications Infrastructure and Services Provider (CISP)	Combined CIP and ASP Infrastructure, Applications, and Services	All of the Above
Class License		
Terminal Equipment Providers License	Installation, Maintenance and distribution license	Installation, Maintenance and Distribution of Telecommunications Equipment
VSAT Services Providers License	VSAT Services License	VSAT Networks to provide Communications Services
One Time Authorization	- DotSo Domain Registrar License	DotSo Registrar Services

Table 1: License categories, Tiers and Coverage

8. EFFECTIVE DATE

The licensing framework is effective on Month 12, 2020.

ANNEX 1: LICENSE CATEGORIES, FEES AND DURATION

License Category	License Period (Term)	Application Fee	Initial Operating Fee (one-time)	Annual License Fee	License Renewal Fee	Access fee for Spectrum	Annual Spectrum Fees
Individual License							
1. COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDERS LICENSE							
<p align="center">National Communications Infrastructure Providers</p> <p align="center">For deployment of communications infrastructure (Fixed, Wireless/Cellular, Fiber Optic, etc.)</p>	20 Years	USD 5,000	USD 275,000	USD \$50,000,	To be determined	Applicable Spectrum Fees	Applicable Spectrum Fees
<p align="center">Regional Communications Infrastructure Providers (one city only)</p> <p align="center">For deployment of communications infrastructure (Fixed, Wireless, Fiber Optic)</p>	10	USD 2,000	USD 5,000	USD. 10,000	To be determined	N/A	N/A
<p align="center">International Communications Infrastructure Providers (Submarine Cable Landing Station license, etc.)</p>	15	USD 5,000	USD 100,000	USD 50,000	To be determined	N/A	N/A
2. APPLICATIONS SERVICE PROVIDERS (ASP) LICENSE							
<p align="center">Applications and Services Provider) (Includes ISP, Vehicle Tracking, etc.)</p>	15 Years	USD 1,000	USD 5,500	USD 5,000	To be determined	N/A	N/A
<p align="center">Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO)</p>	15 Years	USD 5,000	USD 100,000	USD 10,000	To be determined	N/A	N/A

3. COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES (CISP) LICENSE							
Communications Infrastructure and Services Provider	20	USD 10,000	USD 2.5 Million	USD 50,000	To be determined	Applicable Spectrum Fees	Applicable Spectrum Fees
Class License							
Class A: Telecommunications Terminal Equipment Manufacturers Distribution, Installations & Maintenance	5 Years	USD 500	USD 1000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Class B: Telecommunications Terminal Equipment Distribution, Installations & Maintenance	5 Years	USD 100	USD 200	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
VSAT Operated through Foreign Hub Operators	10 years	USD \$100	N/A	USD. 10,000 Per VSAT Terminal		N/A	Based on Bandwidth
GMPCS Landing Rights Authorization	15 years	USD\$2,000	USD. \$ 12,500	N/A		N/A	N/A
Dot SO Domain Name Registrar Service Provider	Open	One Time Registration Fee of USD 100		N/A		N/A	N/A