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**GENERAL NOTICES • ALGEMENE KENNISGEWINGS**

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**INDEPENDENT COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY OF SOUTH AFRICA  
NOTICE 402 OF 2020****EXTENSION OF THE CLOSING DATE FOR WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS ON THE CODE  
FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES DRAFT REGULATIONS**

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa ("the Authority") hereby extends the date for submission of written comments on the Code for Persons with Disabilities Draft Regulations published on 12 June 2020 in *Government Gazette* No 43418 by a period of fourteen **(14) working days**.

**The closing date is extended from 27 July 2020 to 14 August 2020 at 16h00.**

The Authority has taken note that the following pages in the previously published notice were omitted and hereby also publishes same:

- Page 138 -1.1;
- Page 139 – 1.5 and 1.6;
- Page 140-1.9 – 1.11;
- Page 141-1.14-1.7 of Annexure A (National Relay System Specifications Applicable to Video); and
- Section 2 of Explanatory memorandum of the Draft Code for Persons with Disabilities Regulations.

Interested persons are invited to submit written representations by the closing date, either by registered mail, facsimile transmission or electronically (in Microsoft Word) for the attention of Ms Nditsheni Hangwani, Code for Persons with Disability Project Leader at: Ms Nditsheni Hangwani at [nhangwani@icasa.org.za](mailto:nhangwani@icasa.org.za).



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**Adv. Dimakatso Qocha**  
**Acting Chairperson**

## Annexure A

### National Relay System Specifications Applicable to Video

#### 1. Technical Provision

##### 1.2 Type of Service Provision

The VRS service provision must be an open eco system solution (interoperable) that enables access via:

- PC software;
- Tablet software;
- Smart phone software applications;
- Television interface; or
- Videophone.

##### 1.3 Handling Multiple Calls

The NRS platform must consist of a series of technology applications that are made up of:

- an Automatic Call Distributor (ACD) for communication with national infrastructure;
- a universal connectivity platform for cataloguing;
- monitoring and billing, a mobile and desktop application for user accessibility;
- a set of accessibility services that connect the platform to the user applications; and
- human capital for interpreting.

##### 1.4 Call Routing

Call routing must be possible through the use of a common number outbound and through the use of subscriber personalised (telephony and IP) number or through a standard telephone number, inbound.

### 1.5 Service Allocation

The end user must be able to access all VRS services.

### 1.6 Management

The service provider must at all times monitor the platform, interfaces and gateways that allow protocol communication and this information must be made available on request. The service providers must ensure that the delivery of all updates to the system, from the Call centre applications to the end user applications are managed in a structured manner and remain available to the end user.

### 1.8 Infrastructure Requirements and Recommendations

Basic characteristics

- Sign language uses the movements and positions of the hands, eyes, mouth, face and body.
- Lip-reading supported by voice can be used together with sign language.
- Lip-reading can play an essential part of Sign Language communication and therefore is benefitted by VRS.
- In video-coding terms, the scene with one signer may be regarded as containing a medium to high motion content.
- Sign language requires good visual reproduction of movements. For the application of sign language transmission in a person-to-person conversation at low bit rates (based on the use of dated equipment or network access at the user end), the following basic minimum performance goals must apply:
  - 25-30 frames per second at CIF resolution and a max. 0.4s delay, accepting occasional blur less than that corresponding to QCIF during medium motion.
  - Sound synchronism better than 100 ms.
  - End-to-end delay (latency) must be below 0.4 s.
- Broadband Access - Broadband access requirements will be defined by the service provider based on the end user device, (mobile, pc, tablet) the type (fixed or mobile) and capability of network infrastructure (e.g. DSL, Ethernet, 3G, 4G) used as well as the quality of service offered.

### 1.12 Accessibility & Caller Validation

Subscribers to VRS must have their own standard telephone numbers, which must be associated with an IP address. This must allow anyone to contact the subscriber from any device. Users would simply have to dial the phone number of the person they want to call (11 or more digits depending on where they are calling from). The call would be routed to the platform, then, depending on the phone number called and the parameters of the user's account, the platform would determine whether the call requires the services of an interpreter. Geographic location details must be made available (where provided) for mobile calls (specifically emergency calls). The end-user will be charged for VRS calls with IP addresses located outside South Africa.

### 1.13 Confidentiality

Confidentiality provision must be available through the use of VPN (increased bandwidth requirements) or through the use of an agreed standard encryption. This must only be between Central Points if required as it adds another level of complexity for the end user. Service confidentiality and security<sup>1</sup> To achieve functional equivalency, confidentiality and security associated with the relay services are one of the critical subjects.

Privacy, confidentiality and security shall be maintained to achieve functional equivalency. Privacy, confidentiality and security considerations extend both to the technologies used by relay services and the human CAs.

Relay services shall be able to provide encrypted calls if the mainstream telephone services of the country in which the relay service is located provides encrypted calls. More generally, requirements for confidentiality and call security should mirror those of the mainstream telecommunications services of the country in question.

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<sup>1</sup> Rec. ITU-T F.930 (03/2018)

## **EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM ON THE DRAFT CODE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES REGULATIONS**

### **2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 2.1 The Authority would like to acknowledge and thank all stakeholders who participated in the process aimed at reviewing the Regulations on the Code for Persons with Disabilities (“third Draft Regulations”).
- 2.2 The following stakeholders submitted written representations to the third Draft Regulations:
- 2.2.1 SABC
  - 2.2.2 E-TV
  - 2.2.3 MultiChoice
  - 2.2.4 Vodacom
  - 2.2.5 MTN
  - 2.2.6 Cell C
  - 2.2.7 Telkom
  - 2.2.8 Liquid Telecoms
  - 2.2.9 South African National Council for the Blind (SANCB)
  - 2.2.10 Epilepsy South Africa
  - 2.2.11 DeafSA
  - 2.2.12 The Association for Hearing Loss Accessibility & Development (AHLAD)
  - 2.2.13 ConvoRelay

### **3.1. AD NATIONAL RELAY SYSTEM**

The Authority requested information regarding the cost of providing the National Relay System (NRS) from I-ECS licensees, and only one licensee responded. The Authority has considered the cost implications of providing this service and it was clear that it would be feasible for licensees to provide. In terms of the recommendations received from the stakeholders, the (NRS) was included in the draft regulations and will enable persons with Disabilities to have immediate access to emergency services. The establishment and

maintenance of an NRS technology platform will allow Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals the ability to communicate.

### **3.2. AD GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROVISION TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE (ECS) LICENSEES**

Pursuant to the recommendations received from Epilepsy South Africa and the ICT Chamber for Persons with Disabilities Working Group, warning to photo sensitive viewers was included in the draft Regulations as a requirement for ECS licensees.

### **3.3. AD GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROVISION TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FOR I-ECS LICENSEES**

**Emergency services:** the functionalities that the Authority deems it necessary for I-ECS licensees to provide functionalities that enable persons that are perhaps deaf or hard of hearing to acquire emergency assistance.

### **3.4. AD CONTRAVENTION OF PENALTIES**

The insertion of "10% of a licensee's annual turnover for everyday or part thereof during which the contravention continued" as a harsher penalty is due to the Authority's view that the contravention of the Regulations must be viewed in a serious light as the contravention thereof deprives persons with Disabilities with access to information and their rights to dignity.