



Consultation Paper on the Review of the Licensing Regulations 2019

July 2025

Consultation Guidance

This Consultation Paper is a preliminary engagement of key stakeholders before the activation of the rule-making process of the Commission under Section 71 of the Nigerian Communications Act 2003. The outcome of this Consultation Process will provide the clarity and consensus that will support reviews and possible changes to the Licensing Regulations 2019. The Commission will take into account all comments and recommendations as part of its participatory approach to attainment of the objectives of the Nigerian Communications Act 2003.

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Schedule- Consultation Feedback and Comments Response Template

1. Introduction

The Licensing Regulations (Regulations) was first issued in 2019 and it provides for licences, application procedures and processes. The Regulations provides for both operational and frequency licences and their distinct procedures and requirements. More importantly the Regulations also set out procedures for transfer of licences, transfer of shares, surrender of licences as well as suspension and revocation of licences.

The Commission conducted a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on the implementation of the Licensing Regulations since its issuance in 2019 and also assessed its impact on the Nigerian Communications Sector. The outcome of the RIA sets out areas that will require changes and amendments and this can be illustrated in three key outcomes. First, sampled respondents within the Sector raised concerns on cumbersome nature of the licence application processes particularly as it relates to start ups and new entrants. Respondents are concerned that these universal requirements can constitute market barriers. Secondly, there are recommendations on the need to expand the licensing framework to accommodate new technologies and innovative services. Thirdly, some sampled licensees stated that the payment process for frequency licences is onerous and recommendations were made on possible instalment or alternative payment procedures.

2. Background

The Regulations provide a regulatory framework for the effective and efficient licensing processes and procedures in the communications industry for the operation of communications systems, facilities and services in Nigeria. It applies to individual licences, class licences and frequency licences as well as any other licence category as may be determined and published by the Commission.

3. Regulatory Proposals

These proposals form the baseline for the review and potential changes to the existing Licensing Regulations 2019 and provide both the context and regulatory purpose for these changes. The Commission puts forward five (5) regulatory proposals and the basis for each of them. These regulatory proposals provide broad outline of the proposed review and shows the foundational basis for the regulatory thought process. Therefore comments from stakeholders will help shape the specific changes and amendments that the Commission will put forward when it activates the rule making process in Q3 2025.

Regulatory Proposal	Basis for Proposal
<p>This Regulatory Proposal is to review the preliminary and pre-licensing evaluation process to ensure in-depth analysis of the applications and the state of the applying entities.</p>	<p>This will ensure an adequate and detailed pre- licensing evaluation that will include background checks. The Proposal aims to ensure only fit and proper entities are licensed with adequate corporate governance systems, technical and financial capabilities.</p>
<p>This Regulatory Proposal is to review the categorisation and classification of Individual and Class operational licences in the Licensing Regulations 2019.</p>	<p>This is to accommodate changes in service orientation, emerging and new technologies as well as changes in the Nigerian Communications ecosystem.</p>
<p>There is a need to conduct a wholesome review of licensable undertakings as well as potential licensable activities. This Regulatory Proposal will review potential changes in existing undertakings and evaluate services that have communications characteristics and currently not licensed by the Commission.</p>	<p>The aim of the Regulatory Proposal is to review current licensable undertakings and correlate them against the existing technological and service offerings in the Nigerian Communications Sector. It will also identify and set forth existing services that are not currently licensed and provide a licensing pathway.</p>
<p>This Regulatory Proposal is to review the preliminary and pre-licensing evaluation process for frequency licences. The Proposal will also extend to licensing conditions and obligations for frequency licences.</p>	<p>The aim of this Regulatory Proposal is to provide clarity and certainty to the licensing process for frequency licences and set out well defined conditions and obligations for all frequency licensees. Lastly, this proposal will set clear milestones and timelines post frequency licensing and consequential regulatory actions.</p>

This Regulatory Proposal is to set out clear expectations for privately owned and publicly listed licensees and provide unique obligations and requirements.	The main aim of this Regulatory Proposal is to create a hover view of the ownership structure and possible changes in existing licensees of the Commission. It will also lead to the inclusion of well-defined provisions in the Licensing Regulations 2019 that takes into consideration the peculiarities of both privately owned and publicly listed licensees.
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4. Consultation Process

This Consultation process is for thirty (30) days from the date of its publication on the website of the Commission. The expected comments/feedbacks will guide the Commission in determining the specific areas for review and changes when it commences its rule making process as outlined by Section 71 of the Nigerian Communications Act 2003. The Process is open to licensees in the Nigerian Communications Sector, consumers, agencies of government, international agencies and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

5. Submission and Feedback Process

All feedbacks and comments on this Consultation Paper should be sent on or before **Friday August 29, 2025** via email to stakeholders@ncc.gov.ng.

The feedback and comments can be contained in the Feedback and Comment Template in the Schedule to this Consultation Paper and additional comments or supporting documentations can be sent as attachments to the mail. The subject of the mail should contain the specific name of the Consultation Paper.

6. Conclusion

The Commission has created a consultation layer in its rule making process to open it up for more participation and engagement. This is also intended to help the Commission feel the pulse of the Nigerian Communications Sector in its review procedure. Clearly, this approach will enhance the rule making process, build cross-

sectoral consensus and ease the bottlenecks in the legislative process. The Commission looks forward to robust feedback from all stakeholders, within and outside Nigeria.

Dated.....July, 2025

Dr. Aminu Maida
EVC/CEO
Nigerian Communications Commission

Schedule



Feedback & Comments Response Template

Please complete this form in full and return to stakeholders@ncc.gov.ng

Consultation Paper	
Name	
Mobile Number/Contact Number	
Representation (If on behalf of any Organisation or entity)	
Name of Organisation/Company/Licensee	
Nature of Industry/Business/Licence	
Website & Email Address	

Confidentiality & Restrictions	
Do you want all your comments/responses published?	Yes/No
Do you want all your comments/responses kept confidential?	Yes/No
Do you want some of your comments/responses kept confidential? Please specify below	Yes/No
Please specify Questions to be kept Confidential	

1. Specific Responses

Question	Response/Comment
Question 1: Do you agree with the Commission setting a licensing process that takes into consideration size, type and nature of applicants in outlining requirements and submissions expectations?	
Question 2: Do you agree with the Commission developing licensing categories and classifications to accommodate new services, emerging technologies and new licensable undertakings?	
Question 3: Do you agree with the Commission reviewing the pre-licensing evaluation criteria, requirements and processes for frequency licences?	
Question 4: Do you agree with the Commission conducting a review of current licensable undertakings in order to determine new licensable undertakings that will be accommodated in the Licensing Regulations?	
Question 5: Do you agree with the Commission with the Commission setting requirements and benchmarks for its licences that are listed on Stock Markets/Exchanges to achieve clarity on ownership and potential changes?	
Question 6: Do you agree with the Commission setting a process for background evaluation of natural persons behind applying entities to determine their eligibility and integrity in managing and directing the affairs of the applicant entity upon issuance of a licence?	

Question 7: Do you agree with the Commission reviewing triggered conducts of persons managing and driving its licensees as well as the development of a Register of Blacklisted Directors and shareholders?	
Question 8: Do you agree with the Commission's proposed review of the Licensing Regulations as it relates to application timelines and processing duration?	
Question 9: Do you agree with the Commission's proposed review of the Licensing Regulations to enable it deploy regulatory sandboxes for trials, evaluations and determinations of potential licensable undertaking in the Nigerian Communications Sector?	

2. General Comments/Additional Responses

General Comments/Additional Responses

Please complete this form in full and return to stakeholders@ncc.gov.ng