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| **MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**  Private Bag X 745, Pretoria, 0001, Tel: +27 12 72 655 2305 Fax: +27 86 654 9200  Tshedimosetso House,1035 Francis Baard Street, Tshedimosetso House, Pretoria, 1000 |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.: 2651.**

**Ms V van Dyk (DA) to ask the Minister of Communications:**

(1) Whether the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) (a) held any public participation meetings and/or (b) informed members of the public prior to its decision to place a moratorium on the licencing of community radio stations; if not, why not; if so, (i) on which dates were the (aa) meetings held and/or (bb) notices placed and (ii) in which publications did the notices appear;

(2) (a) for what period will the specified moratorium be in place and (b) to what extent does the moratorium affect community media;

(3) whether ICASA has taken any steps to solve the issues around community radio station licencing which led to the moratorium; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW2957E

**REPLY**

(1) ICASA Issued a Notice on a Moratorium on Applications for Community Sound Broadcasting Service Licences and related Applications for Radio Frequency Spectrum in a Government Gazette published on 22 September 2015. ICASA did not hold any public consultations on the Moratorium before the Notice on the Moratorium was published in Government Gazette. ICASA’s decision to place the Moratorium was necessitated by;

1. Scarcity of analoque radio frequencies
2. Review of the licensing processes and procedures’ regulations to include a requirement for the ICASA to process registrations for class community broadcasting licences in two intervals per year, which was concluded in March 2016.
3. ICASA’s need for development of a new regulatory framework for community broadcasting.

(2) (a) ICASA will issue a formal notice and communicate its decision to lift the Moratorium once all processes have been completed and it is ready for licensing, which include review of new regulatory framework for community broadcasting, (b) the Moratorium impact on the expansion of community media listenership, however, does not have any impact on existing community sound broadcasting services, since it is applicable to those wishing to apply for a new broadcasting service licence in relation to community sound broadcasting.

(3) Yes, ICASA has taken steps to solve the issues around community radio station licencing, which led to the Moratorium, details of the steps taken include the following;

1. Finalisation of the review of the licencing processes and procedures’ regulations, which include provision for ICASA to process registration for class community broadcasting lincences in two intervals per year,
2. Review of regulatory framework for community broadcasting, ICASA has published a discussion document on the regulatory framework for community broadcasting services with request for written comments and representations from the public,
3. Consultation with existing community radio broadcasters as well as the Department of Communications,
4. Process to develop a framework for community broadcasting,