



Government of Papua New Guinea  
National Information and Communications  
Technology Authority

## National Information and Communications Technology Authority

### PUBLIC NOTICE

# Operator Licensing for the Provision of Low Earth Orbit Satellite Services in PNG

The National Information and Communications Technology Authority (NICTA) is responsible for the regulation of telecommunications in PNG, including the licensing of operators who provide or offer telecommunications services.

It has come to NICTA's notice that providers of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite services may be operating in PNG without having been licensed and are offering such services to potential customers. This is a serious violation of the National Information and Communications Technology Act 2009, (the Act) and will not be permitted to continue. Perhaps the most well-known example of a LEO satellite service is Starlink, but there are others. In this connection NICTA advises that it is in consultation with StarLink who is now taking steps to obtain relevant licences in PNG.

LEO satellite services are network services under the Act and, accordingly, a network, service licence is required from NICTA. NICTA recognises that, because the services are supplied by satellite technology, there may have been some misunderstanding whether the Act generally, and the licensing provisions in particular, apply. The Act operates extra-territorially, and therefore it is not relevant that some part of the network and potential operators may be outside PNG territory. There is no doubt about the matter and about where the services are delivered. A licence is necessary.

NICTA is considering whether additional or different conditions of licence should apply to LEO satellite services compared to other terrestrial network services. NICTA will conduct a public consultation shortly and will publish a discussion paper on possible new or additional conditions, and invite interested stakeholders and the public generally to make any submissions they wish on these matters before they are finalised. In the meantime, the general conditions relating to individual network service licences, which are set out in the Operator Licensing Rules, 2011 (available on NICTA's website: [www.nicta.gov.pg](http://www.nicta.gov.pg)), apply.

Current and intending providers of LEO satellite services who are not already network service licensees are invited to contact NICTA to discuss whether they are eligible to be licensed as network service operators. NICTA's approach to these matters is to assist intending service providers to understand and comply with the relevant regulatory requirements.

There have been some cases to date where an organisation has needed approval to import or operate LEO satellite services on a limited basis, but has no wish to be a

telecommunications network operator, or to have a licence for the provision of services to others. In some of these cases NICTA has been able to grant special approvals on a restricted or limited basis, , and where the approval was required to demonstrate the capability of the service for a limited period of time. Although NICTA does not wish to multiply exceptions, it is willing to consider other cases that may, in the overall public interest or general expediency, warrant special attention given the potential of these services in offering high speed broadband services including to rural and remote areas where services are non-existent and or inadequate.

The contact within NICTA for potential or intending LEO satellite service providers and customers is: Mr Panny Yokope, Director, Licensing and Enforcement, Telephone: +675 3033 254 email: [pyokope@nicta.gov.pg](mailto:pyokope@nicta.gov.pg)

**Authorised by  
Kila Gulo-Vui  
Chief Executive Officer**