

**REGULATION N°... / ICT-SA /RURA/2023 OF... /... /2023
GOVERNING THE SHORT CODE ALLOCATION**

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The Regulatory Board;

Pursuant to Law n° 09/2013 of 01/03/2013 establishing the Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority;

Pursuant to Law n° 24/2016 of 18/06/2016 governing Information and Communication Technologies;

Having reviewed regulation n° 003/ICT.SCRE- RURA/2014 on short code allocation;

Considering the high demand of short codes for both emergency and general public services and for the provision of value added services through various networks and applications;

Conscious that short codes are a finite resource;

After consideration and deliberation in its session of /.... /2023;

HEREBY ISSUES THE FOLLOWING REGULATION

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article One: Purpose of this regulation

The purpose of this Regulation is to establish the short codes allocation procedures and related requirements.

Article 2: Definitions of terms

In this regulation, the terms below shall have the following meanings:

1° Assignee: a legal entity to whom short code has been apportioned to by the Regulatory Authority;

2° Regulatory Authority: Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority

3° Assignment: the process of issuing short codes to an eligible applicant;

4° Allocation: procedure of apportioning number block or code to service providers;

5° Cross-network codes: short codes to be used for all other commercial services by other private organizations or businesses allow the end-users access of their information /services with or without access fees or tariffs;

6° emergency and security codes: codes used in services where using short code is a necessity, for effective call routing or the service reaches the general public for rescue reasons like Fire-fighting brigade, child helpline, traffic accidents, security assistance, Human life protection, ambulance amongst others.

7° Government service codes: codes exclusively used by any Government institution in national interests such as weather forecast, customer care service, utilities, data collection, service inquiries among others that do not include security and emergency services;

8° operators internal network codes: short codes used by a certain operator or uniformly across all networks by end-users to access common critical network information/services like credit top-up, credit balance check, customer care;

9° MSISDN: is a number uniquely identifying a subscription in a mobile network, it is the phone number associated with a single SIM card and is the number to which you call or send an SMS message

10° NDC: also known as the Area Code; it is a combination of digits identifying a numbering area within a country and/or network/service.

11° Short code: a combination of digits that forms a special number with fewer digits than the MSISDN number length through which a subscriber can dial independent of a NDC to achieve a telephone connection or access to an application;

12° Number block: a range of numbers grouped together into a unit of allocation;

13° Non-governmental short codes: short codes exclusive to all other organizations and businesses outside government Institutions; they are further divided into operators' internal network codes and Cross-network codes.

14° licensee: a person who holds a license issued by the Regulatory Authority under this regulation

Article 3: Scope

This regulation applies to any Entity who undertakes activities relating to short codes of electronic communications networks and services.

CHAPTER II: SHORT CODE CLASSIFICATION, CATEGORIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT

Section one: Classification and categorisation

Article 4: Short code classes

The short codes are grouped in classes as follows:

- a) Governmental short codes: – This group of short codes represent those set of short codes exclusively utilized by government entities ie both central and local Government.
- b) Non-governmental short codes: – These are short codes exclusive to all other organizations and businesses outside government Institutions.

Article 5: Short code categories

Governmental short codes are categorized as follows:

- a) Emergency and security codes;
- b) Government cross-network codes.

Non-government short codes are categorized as follows:

- c) Operators internal network codes;
- d) Cross-network codes.

Section (ii): Assignment and Operation of Governmental Codes

Article 6: Emergency and security codes

The service nature for using Emergency and Security codes is a necessity and the service provided through this code reaches a significantly large user base and highly beneficial like Fire-fighting, Child helpline, TRAFFIC Accidents, Security assistance, Human life protection, ambulance amongst others.

Short codes falling into this category are free of charge and are used across all the networks for the same service as provided in annex 1.

Article 7: Government cross-network codes

These short codes are exclusively used by any government in national interests such as Weather Forecast, Customer Care Service, Public utilities (ie water, electricity and sanitary services), data collection, Service Inquiries among others that do not include security and emergency services

Section (iii): Assignment and Operation of Non-Governmental Codes

Article 8: Operators internal network codes

These are short codes used by a certain Operator or Uniformly across all networks by end-users to access common network information/services.

The Applicant for operator internal network code shall apply for USSD and short codes assignment to the Regulatory Authority and is free to choose the short codes within the allocated range.

Article 9: Cross-network codes

Cross-network codes are used for all other commercial services by private organizations or Government Institutions and it allows the end-users access of their information /services with or without access fees.

The applied fees by Licensee to the short code assignment shall depend on their commercial agreements.

Cross-network codes are further sub divided into billing Types as follows:

- a. **Toll Free (free for the caller):** Those short codes that will not attract any tariff for usage (no charges/premium on usage) when used by end-users
- b. **Standard pricing:** These short codes attract tariff at standard rate established by the Operator.
- c. **Premium Rates:** These are codes that attract charges at premium rates not exceeding 65frw per session when used by the end-users to access information/call for services on any network.

The applicant for cross-network code shall apply for USSD and short codes assignment to the Regulatory Authority and is free to choose the short codes within the allocated range as provided in the annex 2

Article 10: Temporary short code assignment

The Regulatory Authority may allocate temporary short codes for seasonal activities. The applicant of temporary short codes must specify the period through which the short code will be active on the Network, and are subjected to the same application procedure as short code application.

The annual fee shall be computed on the base of the license duration rounded to the upper number of months with a minimum fee corresponding to two (2) months.

CHAPTER III: SHORT CODE APPLICATION AND ANNUAL FEE

Article 11: Application process

Any Entity who intends to use a short code must make an application to the Director General of RURA by submitting the following documents through online system found on RURA webpage by;

- 1° Fill the application form online;
- 2° A copy of certificate of incorporation/registration, except applicants for Governmental short codes;
- 3° Payment of twenty-five (25,000) Rwf of application fees upon processing the application online; except for emergency and security services exempted of the application fee;

Article 12: Annual fee

Short code assignee for cross-network commercial and non-commercial purposes pay annual fees as provided in the annex 3 and shall be revised by the Regulatory Board from time to time.

The short code assignee for emergency are not charged annual fees and must be strictly used on non-commercial basis.

Article 13: Short code validity

A short code assignee is authorized to use the short code until 31st December of the year of activation and is subject to continuous renewal for activation if the assignee wishes to continue using the assigned short code, at the expiration of its validity period upon successful application for renewal and payment of annual fee.

Article 14: Short code renewal

A short code assignee wishing to renew the authorization for short code usage shall apply for renewal via the online platform found on RURA website not later than 31st January of the following year of assignment.

At the expiration of short code assignment validity period on 31st December of each year, if after 30 days no renewal is made, the Regulatory Authority shall deactivate the short code from the network and withdraw it from the database.

Article 15: Terms and conditions for short code usage

The assignee of short code must comply with the following terms and conditions:

- a) an assignee is not allowed to use the assigned short code number or code for a service other than the type of service to which the number has been assigned and for the purpose specified in the application;
- b) services falling under other regulated sectors including but not limited to Media content, internet banking and other Value-Added Services must comply with the relevant applicable laws;
- c) when promoting a short code service, the assignee must ensure that the advertisement is clear and evident regarding all terms and conditions associated with the use of the service. At all times, the short code assignee must inform consumers of the cost of using the service.
- d) Short code assignment transfer is subject to the Regulatory Authority's approval in the event that is not as a result of a merger.
- e) If the short code is surrendered to the Regulatory Authority; the annual fee will not be refunded.

Article 16: Withdraw of short code

Short codes assigned may be withdrawn in any of the following situations:

- a) for any assignee who does not use the short code for the purpose mentioned in the application;
- b) for any person/ entity who uses a short code without an authorization to operate;

- c) in the case there is a serious or repeated breach of terms and conditions set forth for use of the codes;
- d) if the short code is not brought into services within three (3) months from the date of assignment;
- e) in case regional or international harmonization necessitates such withdrawal;
- f) if there is a need to make a change in the National Numbering Plan;
- g) when there is a violation of any of the provisions of the laws or regulations in force;
- h) The Regulatory Authority may withdraw any assignment overriding national interests.

CHAPTER IV: ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS

Article 17: Issuing a short code without approval

Any licensee who issues a short code to an applicant without approval of the Regulatory Authority is liable to an administrative fine of Five million (5,000,000) Rwanda francs Frw and must immediately deactivate the short code.

Article 18: Misuse of short code assignment

The Regulatory Authority shall cancel the assignment for any person/ entity who does not use the short code for the purpose mentioned in the application;

Article 19: Prohibited transfer of short code assignment

Any person who transfers the assigned short code without the Regulatory Authority's approval is liable to administrative fine of one million (1,000,000) Rwanda francs.

Article 20: Default to pay annual authorisation fee

Any registered entity that defaults to pay annual Regulatory fee is subject to withdrawing of the assignment after 15 days of no renewal made at the expiration of short code assignment validity period on 31st December of year of assignment.

CHAPTER V: FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 21: Repealing provision

The regulation n° 003/ICT.SCRE- RURA/2014 on short code allocation and prior provisions contrary to this regulation are hereby repealed.

Article 22: Commencement

This regulation comes into force on the date of signature by the Chairperson of the Regulatory Board.

Kigali on.... /.... /2023

Chairperson of the Regulatory Board

ANNEX 1:

EMERGENCY AND SECURITY CODES

1.1 Customer Assistance/Enquiry

Short Code	Application	Accessibility
100	Customer Enquiry (English)	All Networks
101	Customer Enquiry (French)	All Networks
102	Customer Enquiry (Kinyarwanda)	All Networks
104 - 109	Spares	-

1.2-Life and Safety Services

Short Code	Application	Accessibility
103	WEATHER WARNING (METEO)	All Networks
110	MARITIME RESCUE SERVICES	All Networks
111	FIRE Bridge	All Networks
112	Police EMERGENCY	All Networks
113	TRAFFIC Accidents	All Networks
114	Health Delivery QoS (MOH)	All Networks
116	Rwanda Investigation Bureau	All Networks
118	TRAFFIC POLICE QUERIES CALL	All Networks
166	RWANDA INVESTIGATION BUREAU	All Networks

1.3- Voice Mail

Short Code	Application	Accessibility
120	CUSTOMER Service	All Networks
121	Voice Mail Deposit	All Networks
122	IN Admin menu (language, balance, etc)	-
123	Voice Mail Retrieval/ MCA	All Networks
126 - 129	Spares	-

1.4-Billing Information

Short Code	Application	Accessibility
125	Verification of Sim Registration and Deregistration	All Networks
130	Credit Recharge	All Networks
131	Check Balance	All Networks
133	Give me balance sub-menu	-
134 -137	Spares	-
138	Recharge within EAC	AIRTEL
139	Spare	

1.5-Other Public Short Code Services

Short Code	Application	Accessibility
170	MIDIMAR	All Networks
199	OMBUDSMAN	All Networks

ANNEX 2:**USSD CODES (3 DIGIT NUMBER) RANGE WITH THE ASSOCIATED SHORT CODE CATEGORIES**

S/N	Short Codes On USSD Application	Number Range	TOTAL Number	
1	Life and Safety Services	110-119	10	
2	Reserved for FUTURE New Services	12x-14x	30	
3	Government Service Codes	150-199	50	
3	Operators Network	AIRTEL/TIGO	2xx	100
4	Codes	MTN	8xx	100
5	E-Education	3xx	100	
6	Insurance and Health/Medical Services	4xx	100	
7	E-Banking/ E-mobile/ E-Transaction	5xx	100	
9	News (Sports News, Promotion/Adverts and Inspirational Tips)	6xx	100	
10	Common Service Codes	7xx	100	
11	Social Services	9xx	100	

4 DIGITS NUMBER RANGE WITH THE ASSOCIATED SHORT CODE CATEGORIES

S/N	Short Codes for SMPP or IVR	Number Range	TOTAL Number	
1	E-Education	1xxx	1000	
2	Insurance and Health/Medical Services	2xxx	1000	
3	Operators Network Voice	MTN	3xxx	1000
	Mail	AIRTEL/TIGO	7xxx	1000
4	Districts	4xxx	1000	
5	Financial Service SMS/Voice Code	5xxx	1000	
6	Any other Common Service Codes	6xxx	1000	
7	NGOs	8xxx	1000	
8	Government Service INFO Codes	9xxx	1000	

ANNEX 3: ANNUAL FEE

Category	Sub- Category	Authorization Charges	Type of Services
USSD		1,300,000	E-application (Dialled with * and #)
Customer Information Services (IVR/SMPP Services)	GOLD*	1,300,000	General Information, Customer Care, Helpline (For Voice and SMS)
	SILVER **	1,040,000	
	BRONZE ***	780,000	
	ORDINARY ****	260,000	

***Gold Numbers:**

Numbers with 4 repetitive digits (e.g 4444)

Number with 4 consecutive digits (e.g 3456)

****Silver Numbers:**

Numbers with 3 repetitive digits (e.g 3444)

Numbers pairs (e.g 34 34, 22 55)

*****Bronze Numbers:**

Numbers with any 2 repetitive digits (10 22)

Numbers with any 3 consecutive digits (2 456)

******Ordinary Numbers:**

Numbers not falling in any of the above category

Seen to be attached on the regulations N° ...RURA/2023 of .../.../2023 governing the short code allocation

Kigali on...../.... /2023

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Chairperson of the Regulatory Board