



RADIO FREQUENCY_SPECTRUM FAQs

- 1. What is radio spectrum?**
- 2. What is spectrum Authorization?**
- 3. Who is responsible for Managing and Assigning radio frequency/spectrum in Uganda?**
- 4. Who qualifies to apply for a radio frequency/spectrum in Uganda?**
- 5. What are the requirements to acquire a frequency/spectrum authorization?**
- 6. What is the process for acquiring radio frequency/spectrum authorization in Uganda?**
- 7. What is the process of discontinuing the use of assigned frequencies?**
- 8. What is a Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) spectrum fees structure?**
- 9. What are the requirements and authorization process for additional two-way radio communication equipment to be operated at the already assigned frequency?**
- 10. What are the requirements and authorization process for changing operating parameters including site locations of a broadcast transmission station?**
- 11. What is the validity period for a frequency authorization?**
- 12. Do I require authorization for the 2.4GHz and 5.8 GHz ISM bands?**
- 13. Where and how are the radio frequency interference cases reported?**

1. What is radio spectrum?

Radio spectrum refers to the radio frequencies in the range used for wireless communications including applications for mobile industry and other sectors for communication over the airwaves.

The current radio spectrum consideration is the electromagnetic spectrum from 3 Hz to 3000 GHz (3 THz).

2. What is spectrum Authorization?

Spectrum Authorization is express permission given to a qualified applicant to use spectrum resources in accordance to the way the

Commission has designated the particular usage aligned to international standards, best industry practices and the national table of Frequency allocation.

3. Who is responsible for Managing and Assigning radio frequency/spectrum in Uganda?

The managing and assigning of radio frequencies/spectrum in Uganda is solely Uganda Communications Commission's responsibility. The UCC is by law (Uganda Communications Act. 2013) mandated to execute that function.

4. Who qualifies to apply for a radio frequency in Uganda?

- a. Organizations registered, working and based in Uganda.
- b. Individuals based in Uganda with a physical address in Uganda.
- c. All parties intending to use radio spectrum within Uganda.

5. What are the requirements to acquire a frequency authorization?

One has to apply to UCC and get an authorization after meeting all requirements including paying the associated fees before they can be allowed to use spectrum.

Depending on the intended use of the desired radio frequencies, there are several different requirements. For details see annex YY

6. What is the process for acquiring radio frequency authorization in Uganda?

Radio frequencies are utilized in many various ways, depending on the intended use different processes are in place to facilitate smooth authorization. For details, refer to Annex YY.

7. What are the requirements and authorization process for additional two-way radio communication equipment to be operated at the already assigned frequency?

For the already assigned radio frequencies to which one requires to have additional radio equipment added the following are required;

- a. Fully completed application forms for radio communication services for;
 - Each base/fixed radio station
 - Each model/type of equipment used for mobile radio stations and handheld radio sets (walkie-talkie)
- b. of technical specifications for all radio equipment types and models to be operated.

All these should be addressed to the office of the Executive Director.

8. What is the process of discontinuing the use of assigned frequencies?



- a. Submit a formal letter addressed to the Executive Director informing the Commission about the discontinued use of the assigned frequencies.
- b. If the operator has no outstanding obligations with the UCC, the Commission will issue a frequency withdrawal or authorization termination.;
- c. The Commission shall thereafter verify if the operator terminated use of the withdrawn spectrum.

9. What is a UCC spectrum fee structure?

This a fees schedule that presents how the radio spectrum for the different frequency bands and radio service application are calculated. See UCC Fee Structure for details and Annex XY for evaluation process.

10. What are the requirements and authorization process for changing radio station parameters including site locations of a broadcast transmission station?

An applicant wishing to change radio station parameters including site location of a broadcast transmitter station is required to;

- a. Submit a formal Letter addressed to Executive Director requesting for permission to change specified parameters.
- b. Fully completed forms for broadcasting services clearly indicating the new proposed parameters.
- c. Photocopies of RF equipment and antennas provided by the manufacturers to be used.

The authorization process entails;

- a. Review of the application to verify whether it is complete and meets the necessary requirements.
- b. Where the application is not complete, the Commission shall contact the applicant and request for the missing information to be provided; if the applicant meets all the requirements, the Commission shall proceed to process the application for authorization.
- c. After processing the application, the applicant shall be issued with a letter of authorization to change site location of the broadcast transmission station.
- d. After completing the installations within the specified period, the applicant shall invite the Commission to inspect the installations; If the installations meet the licensing conditions, a station frequency license shall be issued to the radio station;

11. What is the validity period for a frequency licenses?

The validity periods of the radio frequency authorization may vary depending on the period determined by UCC. In normal circumstances, annual authorizations are issued.

For shorter or longer periods, the applicant shall justify to the Commission in their application for the frequency authorization.

12. Do I require license for the 2.4GHz and 5.8 GHz ISM bands?

The above bands are wireless spread radio spectrum bands designated internationally for Industrial, Scientific and Medical applications use. Those intending to use radio spectrum in those bands for private services do not have to seek authorization from UCC and no frequency fees are payable.

However, approval has to be sought from UCC for intended use of the 2.4 GHz and 5.8 GHz frequency bands for public service delivery.

All operations in the ISM bands should adhere to the set guidelines in the link below.

<http://www.ucc.co.ug/files/downloads/Guidelines-for-use-of-5.8-GHz-ISM-band.pdf>

13. Where and how are the radio frequency interference cases reported?

Complaints regarding radio frequency interferences are supposed to be communicated formally in writing to Uganda Communications Commission addressed to the Executive Director describing the nature of interference being experienced. The complaints may be hand delivered to UCC offices, mailed through the post office box or sent on email address "ucc@ucc.co.ug". Thereafter the commission will acknowledge the complaints and carryout investigations and subsequently resolve the reported interference. During the whole interference resolution process, the complainant will be updated of the developments regarding that interference case.

Annex YY.

1. Application requirement for frequency license.

Category1: Two- way Radio communication (Fixed/Mobile) service.

A formal application for frequency addressed to the office of the Executive Director and accompanied by:

1. A copy of certificate of registration or incorporation of a company or copy of NGO registration certificate registered in Uganda;
2. Fully completed application forms for radio communication services, for;
 - a. Each base/fixed radio station;
 - b. Each model/type of equipment used for mobile radio stations and handheld radio sets (walk-talkie);
3. Copies of technical specifications for all radio equipment models/types to be operated;

A copy of the valid private security operator's license from Uganda Police, for the case of security companies.

Category2: Amateur Radio service

A formal application for frequency addressed to the office of the Executive Director and accompanied by:

1. Valid amateur radio operator license;
2. Fully completed application forms for radio communication services for a base/fixed radio station or mobile radio station to be installed;
3. A copy of a recent previous radio amateur license.

Category3: Aircraft Radio Station services

A formal application for frequency addressed to the office of the Executive Director and accompanied by:

1. A copy of certificate of aircraft registration from Civil Aviation Authority;
 2. A copy of the fully completed aircraft radio station approval request document from Civil Aviation Authority;
- Fully completed application forms for radio communication services, for the radio equipment installed in the aircraft.

Category4: Sound Broadcasting

A formal application for frequency addressed to the office of the Executive Director and accompanied by:

1. Company profile (to include certified photocopies of the certificate of registration or incorporation of the company or NGO registered in Uganda and Memorandum and Articles of Association);
2. Engineering brief of the project to include;
 - a. Technical specifications of Broadcast and Studio Transmitter,
 - b. technical description of system, to include a diagram of network, configuration, and network implementation schedule;

- c. projected Broadcast coverage areas;
3. Copies of technical specifications/data sheets for broadcast transmitter/ receiver, repeater, studio to link (STL) transmitter and receiver, broadcast and STL antennas;
4. Fully completed application forms for broadcasting services for transmit and receive radio station/s to be installed.

Category2: VSAT operation authorization

A formal Letter addressed to Executive Director requesting for VSAT Authorization and accompanied by;

Sub-Category 1: VSATs for public networks,

Upon becoming Licensed Public Service Provider, submit:

1. Company Profile (to include a photocopy of the Certificate of Registration);
2. Fully completed technical application forms for VSAT.
3. Photocopies of RF equipment and VSAT antenna provided by the manufacturers.

Sub-Category 2: VSATs for private networks,

1. Company Profile (to include photocopy of the Certificate of Registration);
2. Fully completed technical application forms for VSAT.
3. Photocopies of RF equipment and VSAT antenna provided by the manufacturers

2. Processes for radio frequency/spectrum authorization.

1. VSAT authorization.

The Commission shall use the following procedure in processing applications for VSAT authorization after an application has been submitted.

- a. The Commission shall verify whether the applicant qualifies for the radio frequency spectrum/VSAT authorization applied for.
- b. If the applicant does not qualify, appropriate formal responses will be made.
- c. If the applicant qualifies, the application shall be checked to verify whether the application is complete and meets the necessary requirements.
- d. Where the application is not complete, the Commission shall contact the applicant and request for the missing information to be provided; If the applicant meets all the requirements and qualifies for the assignment of spectrum/VSAT authorization, the Commission shall proceed to process the application for frequency/VSAT authorization.
- e. After processing the application, the applicant shall be invoiced for spectrum fees/VSAT authorization fees and advised to pay within a maximum of 30 days. The application shall be cancelled provided the applicant does not settle the spectrum fees/VSAT authorization fees within 30 days.
- f. After payment of the license fees, the applicant shall be issued with a letter of frequency assignment/VSAT authorization document.
- g. In case of application for broadcasting frequencies, if the application meets the requirements and settles the processing fees, the public shall be notified through the press for a period of two weeks. If no objection to the application is received, sections



(e) and (f) shall apply.

- h. After completing the installations within the specified period, the applicant shall invite the Commission to inspect the installations;
- i. If the installations meet the licensing conditions, a station frequency license shall be issued to the radio station;
- j. For both the radio and television broadcast stations, the broadcaster shall be required to seek permission from the Commission to carry out on-air testing at the stations. The Commission thereafter shall grant permission for On-Air testing of the station by the broadcaster for a period of 21 days to ensure that there is no signal interference with the neighboring stations before the station is issued with an operational radio station license.

2. Radio frequency Authorization in the Access bands.

- b. Submit a formal inquiry to the Executive Director on the availability of the spectrum in the access band.
- c. If the required spectrum is available, reservation is made for the applicant of the Public Service Provider (PSP) and Public Infrastructure Provider (PIP) license. For guidelines on application requirements and processing procedure for service and infrastructure licences, please refer to this link <http://www.ucc.co.ug/data/smenu/80/List-of-Licensees.html>
- d. After the PIP and/or PSP licenses are acquired, the licensee is invoiced for frequency fees and advised to pay within a maximum of 30 days. The application shall be cancelled if the applicant does not settle the license fees within 30 days.
- e. After payment of the frequency fees, the licensee shall be issued with a letter of frequency assignment.
- f. The licensee is expected to utilize the frequencies within 18 months from the date of frequency assignment so as to discourage spectrum hoarding. If the applicants have not operationalized the assigned spectrum within the 18 months, the Commission shall withdraw the frequencies. For further information on spectrum hoarding, please refer to this link <http://www.ucc.co.ug/spectrum/spectrumHoardingGuidelines.pdf>

3. Spectrum fees Evaluation process

- a. Review of the application to verify whether it is complete and meets the necessary requirements.
- b. Where the application is not complete, the Commission shall contact the applicant and request for the missing information to be provided; If the applicant meets all the requirements, the Commission shall proceed to process the application for authorization.
- c. After processing the application, the applicant shall be invoiced for spectrum fees and advised to pay within a maximum of 30 days. The application shall be cancelled if the applicant does not settle the spectrum fees within 30 days.
 - d. After payment of the spectrum fees, the applicant shall be issued with a letter of authorization to use the specified frequencies.