



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
Ministry of Home Affairs

National Earth Stations Licensing Framework

May 2026

Government of Bermuda

Ministry of Home Affairs

National Earth Stations Licensing Framework

May 2026

1. Minister's Vision

The Government of Bermuda is positioning the country as a forward-thinking global hub for the space and satellite industry to drive economic diversification, innovation, and educational advancement beyond its traditional strengths in insurance and tourism. The strategy envisions Bermuda as a jurisdiction that fosters private sector innovation through balanced regulation, advances STEM education to inspire future generations, strengthens global collaboration with space agencies and industry leaders, and upholds responsible policies aligned with international treaties and sustainability standards. This vision is supported by four key pillars: developing clear regulatory frameworks to attract responsible space activities, building domestic capacity through educational partnerships and professional training, engaging internationally with bodies like the ITU and Ofcom, and strategically maximizing revenue from Bermuda's national orbital resources through prudent management and partnerships.

2. Policy Framework and Regulatory Mandate

This Framework is issued by the Government of Bermuda as a statement of national policy for the licensing and operation of Earth Stations. The Government sets policy direction. The Regulatory Authority of Bermuda implements that policy within its statutory mandate. The Regulatory Authority of Bermuda ("RA") is responsible for the oversight of the electronic communications and electricity sectors including electronic communications services, spectrum and equipment certification and has the power to regulate provision of satellite electronic communications services and operation of earth stations in Bermuda.

In the last decade satellite services have evolved from the provision of niche, point-to-point communications to enabling end-to-end connectivity solutions capable of supporting broadband, mobile, and Internet of Things services at large scale. Advances in satellite technology, especially in new LEO constellations, now allow satellite operators to deliver services on mass market directly to end users. As these capabilities expand, it is increasingly important that provision of satellite services and operation of Earth Stations be subject to appropriate regulatory oversight to ensure efficient spectrum use, fair competition, consumer protection, and the continued integrity and resilience of national communications infrastructure.

This National Earth Stations Licensing Framework ("Framework") governs electronic communications services provided over satellite networks, to ensure the efficient use of spectrum by earth stations and establish obligations for satellite service providers to ensure cybersecurity, integrity of networks and data protection. It also sets out the applicable regulatory obligations, fees, and charges imposed on such network operators and service providers.

The Framework is underpinned by Bermuda's existing legislative framework, including

- Telecommunications Act 1986
- Regulatory Authority Act 2011
- Electronic Communications Act 2011
- Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA, Bermuda)

and its associated secondary legislation to govern electronic communications and spectrum licensing.

Unless otherwise expressly stated, any reference in this Framework to any Act, regulation, determination, directive, policy, guideline, standard, procedure or other statutory or regulatory

instrument shall be construed as a reference to that instrument as amended from time to time, including any consolidation, re-enactment, replacement, substitution or successor instrument.

For the avoidance of doubt, the version of the relevant instrument in force at the time of the relevant application, assessment or decision shall apply.

3. Definitions

Broadcast Receive Only (DTH) Terminal: A broadcast receive-only earth station — usually at consumer premises — for direct-to-home broadcast services via satellite (DTH).

Constellation / Mega Constellation: Not formally defined in the Radio Regulations, but generally, a constellation is a group of satellites working together to provide coordinated coverage and redundancy; a mega-constellation refers to a system with hundreds or thousands of satellites, such as Starlink or OneWeb.

Earth station (RR No. 1.63): A radio station located either on Earth's surface or within the Earth's atmosphere and intended for communication with one or more space stations, or with other Earth stations via one or more space stations.

Earth Station in Motion (ESIM): An earth station used while in motion (on vehicles, aircraft, or ships).

ECC Decision: CEPT guideline recommending harmonized spectrum and telecom practices across CEPT member states.

EO / EESS Ground Station: "EESS" stands for Earth Exploration Satellite Service, a radiocommunication service for remote sensing, earth observation, and meteorology; EO stations are ground stations supporting these purposes.

Feeder-Link Earth Station: A fixed earth station engaged in a feeder link — a radio link from an earth station to a space station (uplink), or vice versa (downlink), forming the primary relay between ground network and satellite system.

Gateway: A device or station connecting different networks; in satellite systems, this typically refers to an earth station linking satellites with terrestrial telecom networks.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): A European Union regulation governing data protection and privacy, providing standards for handling personal data of EU citizens, which may apply to Bermuda for cross-border data exchanges with EU-based entities.

Geostationary satellite (GEO): A satellite in the geostationary satellite orbit, which is a circular orbit in the Earth's equatorial plane and at such an altitude that the satellite's period of rotation equals the Earth's rotation period. Altitude approximately 35,786 km, allowing the satellite to appear fixed relative to a point on Earth.

IoT / M2M Satellite Terminal: A user terminal, typically of low power and low data rate, that connects Internet of Things or machine-to-machine devices to a communications network via a satellite or satellite-terrestrial integrated network, used primarily for automated data collection, telemetry, monitoring, and control functions.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU): A specialized United Nations agency responsible for the coordination and management of global radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbits to prevent harmful interference between space systems.

Low Earth Orbit satellite (LEO): The ITU does not use “LEO” as a formal term in the Radio Regulations; however, it defines non-geostationary satellite orbits (NGSO) broadly to include satellites in low, medium, and highly elliptical orbits. In practice, “LEO” refers to NGSOs at roughly 160 to 2,000 km altitude, as recognized in technical and regulatory literature.

Medium Earth Observation (MEO): Earth-centred orbit with an altitude between 2,000 km and 35,786 km above the Earth’s surface, lying above low Earth orbit (LEO) and below geostationary orbit (GEO). MEO satellites typically have orbital periods ranging from about 2 to 24 hours, as their higher altitude allows coverage of larger areas on Earth with fewer satellites than LEO constellations. MEO is primarily used for navigation (such as GPS and Galileo systems), communication, and some types of Earth observation and scientific satellites. Compared to LEO, satellites in MEO require radiation-hardened components due to their passage through the Van Allen radiation belts.

Minister: The Minister responsible for telecommunications regulation in Bermuda, authorized to enforce and amend licensing policies to ensure alignment with national interests and international obligations.

MSS User Terminal: A mobile-satellite service (MSS) user terminal is a mobile earth station used to communicate with satellites in the MSS; these are user-side devices for satellite phone/data services.

Non-Geostationary Satellite Orbit (NGSO): A satellite in an orbit that is not geostationary. This includes low, medium, and highly elliptical orbits. The ITU distinguishes NGSOs from GSO (geostationary) satellites in many regulatory provisions.

Office of Communications (OFCOM): The UK regulatory authority for broadcasting, telecommunications, postal industries in the United Kingdom, which collaborates with Bermuda on space-related regulatory matters.

Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA): Bermuda’s primary data protection law regulating the collection, use, and sharing of personal data to safeguard individuals’ privacy rights.

Regulatory Authority of Bermuda (RA): The national body responsible for overseeing telecommunications, radio frequency management, licensing, and compliance enforcement, including issuing Communications Operating Licences (COLs) for Earth Stations, ensuring compliance with national and international regulatory standards.

Rocket Communication: Refers to interactions between Earth Stations and rockets during launch, flight, and payload deployment, including tracking, telemetry, and command functions necessary for mission success.

Satellite Filing: The formal process of registering a satellite system with the ITU to ensure compliance with international frequency and orbital regulations, often coordinated by Ofcom in partnership with Bermuda.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM): Fields of study and industries that drive innovation and technological advancement, critical to Bermuda’s space and satellite sector.

Teleport: A teleport is a satellite ground station complex acting as a hub between satellite and terrestrial networks, as noted in ITU and industry standards. An earth station complex (or terminal complex) is a group of inter-operating ground station facilities.

Telemetry, Tracking and Command (TT&C) Station: ITU covers this under the “space operation service”: a station responsible for operational communications with spacecraft for telemetry (health/status), tracking (position/orbit), and command (instructions).

Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT): fixed earth station with small dish antennas for satellite communication, usually following “blanket licensing regimes”.

Unless expressly defined in this Section, any word or expression used in this Framework shall have the meaning assigned to it in any applicable Act or secondary legislation in force from time to time.

4. Introduction and Framework Objectives

The Earth Stations Licensing Framework has been established to provide a structured regulatory approach for the deployment and operation of Earth Stations and provision of satellite-based electronic communications services and ground network operations. Bermuda’s advantageous mid-Atlantic location, coupled with its progressive regulatory framework, makes it an ideal hub for space-related operations from the deployment of end user satellite terminals to Gateway and TT&C earth stations.

This Framework is designed to:

- Encourage technological growth.
- Ensure regulatory and licensing certainty.
- Remove unnecessary regulatory barriers.
- Ensure the availability of reliable and affordable access to electronic communications services in Bermuda.
- Safeguard public safety and national security.
- Ensure compliance with national and international standards.
- Foster investment and economic development.
- Support economic diversification beyond Bermuda’s traditional sectors.
- Align with increased STEM capacity in Bermuda through educational partnerships and professional training.
- Encourage local workforce participation and supplier development in the space and satellite sector.

The introduction of this Framework is a pivotal step in ensuring Bermuda’s continued growth and competitiveness in the satellite communications sector. It aligns with international standards, including ITU Radio Regulations, and establishes a foundation for responsible space governance that balances innovation with regulatory oversight. Under this Framework, satellite-based electronic communications services and ground network operations will be licenced through the Communications Operating Licence (COL) issued by the Regulatory Authority (RA) together with spectrum licences to allow the use of frequencies by earth stations, ensuring a consistent, streamlined process fully aligned with national and international requirements.

5. Scope and Application

This Framework shall apply to all electronic communications services provided by means of satellite and to all electronic communications satellite ground network infrastructure located, installed, or operated within Bermuda. For the purposes of this Framework, satellite ground network infrastructure includes, without limitation, all categories of Earth Stations, including VSATs, ESIMs, MSS user terminals, Gateways, teleport, TT&C, EESS, IoT/M2M Earth Stations, whether operated for commercial, governmental, or research or trial purposes. This Framework shall apply to both geostationary (GEO) and non-geostationary (NGSO) satellite systems and all types of satellite services, including Fixed Satellite Services (FSS), Mobile Satellite Services (MSS) and Broadcasting Satellite Services (BSS).

The application of this Framework ensures that all satellite and associated ground network operations within Bermuda are subject to a consistent regulatory regime, are conducted in accordance with applicable national and international obligations and standards and are subject to regulatory oversight with respect to technical, operational, and security compliance requirements.

6. Licensing Requirements

6.1. Communications Operating Licence

The provision of electronic communications services and networks over satellite within Bermuda requires a Communications Operating Licence (COL), unless an exemption applies.

The Licensing Process: Application for a COL shall be processed in accordance with Annex 1, section 2 (Application Process for other COLs). Applicants shall provide corporate and technical information as requested in Annex 2 of the Regulatory Authority (Master Communications Operating Licence Application Process) General Determination 2019.

Validity: According to the terms in Number 4 of the Electronic Communications (Integrated Communications Operating Licence) Regulations 2013, the licence will be valid for [20 years] and can be renewed for the same period [going through the same process].

The Licensing Timeframe: Upon receipt of a licence application in the prescribed form, the RA shall issue a Communications Operating Licence within 30 business days, provided that all applicable conditions are satisfied, and all required information has been submitted.

Regulatory Fees: Each licensee shall pay a fee equal to [1.65%] of its relevant turnover, as prescribed under the Electronic Communications (Regulatory Authority Fees) Regulations 2022. If exemption from COL applies no regulatory fees shall apply.

Exemptions: The use of ESIMs shall be exempt from the requirement to hold a Communications Operating Licence (COL) where satellite services are provided on board of foreign-registered vessels or aircraft that are overflying the territory of Bermuda or are present at its airports or enter territorial waters of Bermuda. For the avoidance of doubt, the provision of satellite services or networks through the deployment of earth stations on vessels or aircraft registered in Bermuda requires a Communications Operating Licence (COL) from the RA.

In addition to exemptions provided in this Framework, the Minister may, on the recommendation of the RA, direct that the COL licensing requirements and obligations shall not apply, in whole or in part, to any person or class of persons where it considers that their application would be unnecessary or disproportionate, taking into account, inter alia, the number of Earth Stations deployed, the scale and scope of the services provided, and the reasonableness of imposing such requirements and obligations.

6.2. Spectrum Licence

No one may use spectrum to transmit or receive electronic communications without a spectrum licence, a permit (whether permanent or temporal), or an exemption within Bermuda. This covers all radio use, including satellite services and satellite earth station operations unless specifically exempt.

Regulatory Authority (Grant of Spectrum Licences, Permits, and Exempted Frequencies) General Determination 2022 distinguishes between:

- a) High Demand Spectrum (HDS) – Reserved exclusively for commercial licenced use, assigned via competitive processes.
- b) Commercial Non-High Demand Spectrum (NHDS) – Also licensable for services, including communications.
- c) Non-Commercial NHDS – For trials, testing and events.
- d) Exempted Frequencies – Low-risk bands that don't need a licence if rules are followed.

The licensing of satellite spectrum shall be granted on a first-come, first-served basis and shall not be conducted through any competitive, comparative, or auction-based award process. Satellite spectrum shall be treated as either NHDS, Non-Commercial NHDS or exempted frequencies which do not require a spectrum licence.

The Licensing Process: The RA differentiates between two types of spectrum licences:

- a) Blanket spectrum licence that covers unlimited number of terminals within Bermuda and issued for spectrum exclusively assigned to satellite services with no terrestrial services and where no need for frequency coordination exists.
- b) Individual spectrum licences are issued for each Earth Station when coordination with terrestrial services are necessary.

Any Earth Station that is not subject to a blanket licence or is exempt from licensing requires an individual licence from the RA. The application process takes place in accordance with the provisions of Regulatory Authority (Grant of Spectrum Licences, Permits, and Exempted Frequencies) General Determination 2020 applicable to NHDS or Non-Commercial NHDS for research or trial use.

The RA will issue a separate application form for a spectrum licence. The form will require information relating to the operator, contact details, the relevant frequency bands, and the technical parameters necessary to assess Earth Station technical characteristics, and if necessary, conduct frequency coordination with affected services.

When processing applications for spectrum licences, the RA will coordinate with relevant authorities, including the Department of Planning, Parks, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Public Lands and Buildings (DPLB), and the Bermuda Land Development Company (BLDC) to ensure there is no environmental or health and safety issues for the public.

Any Earth Station such as TT&C providing services related to satellite launch operations, spaceflight tracking, or aerospace communications must comply with both UK and Bermuda aviation and aerospace regulations, including those overseen by the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Coordination with the Bermuda Civil Aviation Authority is required to ensure alignment with national airspace and safety protocols.

Operators may also be required to coordinate with relevant Bermuda Government departments, including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Bermuda Civil Aviation Authority, and the Bermuda Police Service, to ensure compliance with cross-sectoral safety, security, and environmental requirements.

Timeframe: Once receiving a licence application in an appropriate form, the RA shall within 30 business days inform applicant about its decision. If decision is positive, applicants must pay the regulatory fees for the issuing of a spectrum licence. Once a regulatory fee is paid, the RA shall issue a spectrum licence. If there is a need for an international coordination or if operation of a terminal requires coordination with other stakeholders within Bermuda, the RA will inform the applicant and the timeframe for issuing a spectrum licence will be moved till those matters are resolved.

Licence spectrum fees: Each licensee shall pay a fee, as prescribed under the Electronic Communications (Spectrum Service Fees) Regulations 2016, or any successor regulation or amendment thereto in force from time to time.

The amount of spectrum fees depends on whether an earth station is subject to a blanket or individual licence. Frequencies exempt from spectrum licensing are not subject to spectrum fees. Issuing of a blanket licence shall be subject to one-time fee of USD 200 per GSO satellite or 1000 for NGSO satellite network. One spectrum licence will be issued which would cover all types of applications (fixed, land ESIMs).

Issuing of an individual licence shall be subject to one-time fee: USD 1000. Depending on the time spent processing an application, in case of complex frequency interference issues requiring coordination with other services, the regulatory fee can be different. The RA will inform the applicant as soon as possible if the regulatory fee is greater than the one indicated.

There are no additional regulatory fees for the use of satellite spectrum in Bermuda.

Applicants for a spectrum licence must be a company that is duly incorporated under the laws of Bermuda.

Exemptions: The use of ESIMs shall be exempt if used by maritime and aero applications in accordance with the following ECC decisions:

- ECC Decision (15)04 on the harmonized use, free circulation and exemption from individual licensing of Land, Maritime and Aeronautical Earth Stations On Mobile Platforms (ESOMPs) operating with NGSO FSS satellite systems in the frequency ranges 17.3-20.2 GHz, 27.5-29.1 GHz and 29.5-30.0 GHz.
- ECC Decision (13)01 on the harmonized use, free circulation and exemption from individual licensing of Earth Stations On Mobile Platforms (ESOMPs) within the frequency bands 17.3-20.2 GHz and 27.5-30.0 GHz (in GSO).
- ECC Decision (18)04 on the harmonized use, exemption from individual licensing and free circulation and use of land-based Earth Stations In-Motion (ESIM) operating with GSO FSS satellite systems in the frequency bands 10.7-12.75 GHz and 14.0-14.5 GHz.
- ECC Decision (18)05 on the harmonized use, exemption from individual licensing and free circulation and use of Earth Stations In-Motion (ESIM) operating with NGSO FSS satellite systems in the frequency bands 10.7-12.75 GHz and 14.0-14.5 GHz.
- ECC Decision (05)11 on the free circulation and use of Aircraft Earth Stations (AES) in the frequency bands 14-14.5 GHz (Earth-to-space), 10.7-11.7 GHz (space-to-Earth) and 12.5-12.75 GHz (space-to-Earth).
- ECC Decision (05)10 on the free circulation and use of Earth Stations on board Vessels (ESV) operating in fixed satellite service networks in the frequency bands 14-14.5 GHz (Earth-to-space), 10.7-11.7 GHz (space-to-Earth) and 12.5-12.75 GHz (space-to-Earth).

Operator of Earth Stations must notify the RA about the intention to use ESIMs on aircraft and vessels and confirm that operation will be performed in accordance with one of the ECC decisions as referenced above and applicable ITU resolutions.

If Earth Station is using receive frequencies, like a Broadcast Receive Only (DTH) Terminal, there is no transmission, no spectrum licence is required.

6.3. Type Approval and Homologation of Equipment

Under Section 50 of the Electronic Communications Act 2011, a person may not import or sell any Earth Stations in Bermuda unless the equipment complies with recognized international standards including the Federal Communications Commission of the United States of America (FCC); the Canadian Standards Association International (CSA); the United Kingdom (UK); or the European Union (EU), and is certified by the RA as meeting those standards and any applicable technical requirements.

The Licensing Process: Applicant who wants to import or use an earth station must fill out a type approval form and include either a copy of the FCC Certificate, EU, CSA or UK certificate.

The Licensing Timeframe: Upon receipt of an application in the prescribed form, the RA shall issue a type approval within [10 business days], provided that all applicable conditions are satisfied, and all required information has been submitted.

Regulatory Fees: Fee for issuing a type approval is [USD 200] per application.

7. Technical and Operational Standards

The RA makes a distinction between:

- a) A blanket earth station licensing which allows the use of unlimited number of terminals within Bermuda under general technical requirements.
- b) An individual earth station licence which allows the use of a specific earth station in each location under specific technical conditions.

The following frequencies are subject to a blanket licence:

- L/S-bands MSS: 1525-1559 MHz (Space-to-Earth), 1626.5-1660.5 MHz (Earth-to-Space), 1610-1626.5 MHz (Earth-to-Space), 1980-2010 MHz (Earth-to-Space), 2170-2200 MHz (Space-to-Earth), 2483.5-2500 MHz (Space-to-Earth). Applies to MSS User Terminals.
- Ku-band FSS: 10.7-11.7 GHz, 11.7-12.75 GHz (Space-to-Earth); 14.0-14.5 GHz (Earth-to-Space). Applies to both stationary and ESIM terminals.
- Ka-band FSS: 17.3-20.2 GHz (downlink); 27.5-27.8185 GHz, 28.4545-28.8265 GHz, 29.4625-30.0 GHz (Earth-to-Space). Applies to both stationary and ESIM terminals.

The RA may issue a blanket spectrum licence for Earth Stations subject to the condition that such Earth Stations comply with the applicable Interface Requirements (IRs) published by the Office of Communications (Ofcom), United Kingdom, as adopted by the Minister and as amended or replaced from time to time.

Compliance with the relevant IRs shall be a continuing condition of the spectrum licence. Applicants and licensees are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of, and comply with, the current version of the applicable IRs.

In addition to compliance with the applicable UK Interface Requirements (IRs), all Earth Stations shall also operate in accordance with any local technical standards, operational requirements, or location-specific parameters established by the RA to ensure compatibility with the national spectrum environment and to protect other licenced services to avoid frequency interference, including the following requirements:

- Operations must be immediately suspended in the event of frequency interference or upon the request of the RA.

- Maintain operational protocols that ensure the continuous reliability and quality of satellite communication services.
- Implement risk management and emergency response plans to address potential system failures, interference, or natural hazards.
- Conduct regular inspections, testing, and preventative maintenance to sustain compliance with operational safety and performance standards.
- Ensure personnel are adequately trained, certified, and competent in Earth Station operations and emergency management.
- When operating TT&C earth stations, maintain adequate insurance coverage in accordance with the UK Outer Space Act 1986 (as extended to Bermuda) to address potential liabilities.
- Deploy Earth Stations in accordance with Bermuda's building codes, engineering standards, and environmental requirements as applicable to ensure operational resilience and public safety.
- Deploy Earth Stations in locations that minimize environmental and public impact while ensuring operational efficiency.
- When operating Earth Stations, operators shall ensure compliance with all relevant standards relating to utility connections, structural integrity, and operational resilience to maintain safe operation.
- When government-owned properties are utilized, permission and rental agreements must be obtained from the Ministry of Public Works and Environment.

8. Compliance and Monitoring

The RA is responsible for ensuring continuous compliance with the terms and conditions of all Communications Operating Licences (COLs) and spectrum licences. The RA may conduct periodic inspections, both scheduled and unannounced, to verify that Earth Stations operate within approved technical and environmental parameters.

To ensure continuous compliance, the RA will conduct:

- Periodic assessments to verify conformity with licensing terms and international regulatory obligations.
- Physical evaluations of Earth Station facilities to ensure technical integrity, safety, and environmental compliance.

In addition to revenue filing requirements and payment of regulatory fees in accordance with applicable payment determination and fee filing instructions, licensees are required to submit regular performance reports detailing system functionality, maintenance activities, and any interference or incident events as may be determined by the RA. In addition, the RA may conduct technical audits to evaluate the adequacy of systems, cybersecurity protocols, and adherence to international standards such as ITU and UK regulatory requirements.

All licensees are required to maintain accurate and up-to-date operational, maintenance, performance and safety records, which must be made available to the RA upon request. The RA will also maintain a public register of licenced Earth Stations spectrum licences to promote transparency, accountability, and stakeholder confidence.

To support continuous improvement, the RA will periodically review and update its compliance monitoring procedures, within the policy direction set by this Framework, to ensure it remains responsive to technological advancements, evolving international standards, and Bermuda's strategic objectives in fostering a robust and forward-looking space sector.

9. Network Security and Data Protection

Licensees must adhere to Bermuda's national data protection laws and international standards for information security and privacy to ensure secure handling and transmission of data. Protecting sensitive information, including technical data exchanged between Earth Stations and satellites, is a critical priority under this framework. Compliance with Bermuda's Personal Information Protection Act 2016 (PIPA) and applicable international standards, is mandatory to safeguard both personal and technical data.

Licensees shall:

- a) implement robust cybersecurity measures to safeguard networks, communication systems, and satellite data. This includes compliance with Bermuda's data protection framework.
- b) implement appropriate security protocols to prevent unauthorized access, interference, or other risks that may compromise public safety or national security.
- c) incorporate contingency planning, redundancy systems, and disaster recovery measures to ensure service continuity during emergencies or national disasters.

The RA is responsible for monitoring licensees' adherence to data protection requirements. This includes conducting regular audits, security assessments, and enforcing corrective actions when necessary to prevent breach of sensitive information. Non-compliance with data protection requirements may result in significant penalties, including fines, operational restrictions, or revocation of the Communications Operating Licence (COL).

Licensees must notify the RA as soon as possible, but not less than 72 hours since being made aware of technical faults, data breaches, or incidents that could affect safety, service continuity, data privacy or compliance with Bermuda's legal and international obligations.

10. Assistance with Law Enforcement Agencies

Under Schedule 2 of the Electronic Communications Act 2011 of Bermuda, communications providers are subject to standing obligations to ensure that their networks and services are technically capable of supporting lawful interception when presented with a warrant issued by the Governor under section 53.

These obligations include the capability to:

- (i) expeditiously isolate and intercept the content of communications, concurrently with transmission or shortly thereafter;
- (ii) provide associated call-identifying information (i.e. non-content metadata such as dialling, routing and signalling information);
- (iii) deliver intercepted communications and call-identifying information to the Police in a specified, transmissible format;
- (iv) maintain sufficient technical capacity to accommodate a prescribed number of simultaneous interceptions, pen registers and trap-and-trace devices, as determined by ministerial notice;
- (v) retain accurate subscriber records (including prescribed subscriber information) for at least one year and provide such information to the Police as required under the Act.

Satellite electronic communications service or network providers that offer broadband or voice telephony services to customers in Bermuda would generally be expected to comply with Schedule 2 of the Act. The Act does not expressly require interception capabilities to be physically located in Bermuda;

however, providers must ensure that lawful interception and related assistance obligations can be fulfilled effectively and expeditiously in accordance with Bermuda law.

11. Enforcement and Penalties

The RA has the statutory authority to enforce compliance with the conditions of all Communications Operating Licences (COLs) and Earth Station spectrum licences issued under this Framework. Non-compliance with applicable licensing, spectrum, and operational requirements shall be subject to a graduated enforcement framework, proportionate to the nature, severity, and recurrence of the violation.

In instances where cross-jurisdictional matters arise, the RA may coordinate with external regulatory bodies such as Ofcom, the UK Space Agency, ITU, and other relevant authorities to ensure comprehensive oversight and resolution.

Minor technical violations (Tier 1), including first-time or low-risk breaches that do not pose material harm to spectrum integrity, public safety, or national security, shall ordinarily result in a written warning and a correction period of up to thirty (30) days. No monetary penalty shall apply where the deficiency is remedied within the prescribed timeframe. However, where the violation remains uncorrected or is repeated, the Regulatory Authority (RA) may impose an administrative fine of up to USD 5,000 for individuals or USD 15,000 for entities.

Moderate to serious operational violations (Tier 2), including repeated non-compliance or breaches that affect technical, administrative, or reporting obligations under the Earth Station licence or associated spectrum authorisations, shall be subject to a corrective order requiring compliance within thirty (30) to sixty (60) days. In addition, administrative penalties may be imposed in the amount of up to USD 25,000 for individuals and up to USD 75,000 for entities. The RA may annotate the relevant licence to reflect the violation. In the case of a continuing offence, a further administrative fine of USD 5,000 for each day during which the offence continues may be applied.

Critical violations (Tier 3), including wilful misconduct, persistent non-compliance, operation without valid authorisation, or conduct posing risks to national security, public safety, or Bermuda's international obligations, shall attract enhanced enforcement measures. Where committed by an individual, such offences may result in imprisonment for up to two (2) years or a fine of up to USD 50,000, or both. Where committed by an entity, penalties may include a fine of up to USD 150,000 or ten percent (10%) of annual revenues attributable to Earth Station operations, whichever is greater. In the event of a continuing offence, an additional fine of USD 25,000 for each day during which the offence persists may be imposed. The RA may order the immediate suspension of transmission permits, suspend or revoke the Communications Operating Licence (COL) and associated Earth Station spectrum licences in accordance with the Electronic Communications Act 2011 and applicable secondary legislation, and forfeit any financial securities, bonds, or guarantees. Entities or individuals responsible for critical violations may further be disqualified from submitting future licensing applications for a period of three (3) to five (5) years.

Where non-compliance presents an immediate or significant risk to national security, public safety, or Bermuda's compliance with international obligations, the RA reserves the right to take urgent enforcement action, including the immediate suspension of operations pending investigation. Persistent or wilful violations may additionally be referred to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for prosecution under applicable Bermuda legislation.

The RA will maintain transparency and procedural fairness in all enforcement actions. All operators of Earth Stations or service providers of satellite services will be notified in writing of any alleged breaches and provided an opportunity to respond before the RA determines the appropriate course of action. All enforcement decisions will be documented and, where appropriate, published to ensure accountability and public confidence in the regulatory process.

12. Transitional Provisions

The Transitional Provisions section outlines the regulatory adjustments required for existing Earth Station operators following the implementation of this Framework. To ensure fairness, stability, and continuity within the sector, a 12-month transition period will be granted for current operators to bring their operations into full compliance with the updated licensing and technical requirements established under this Framework.

During this adjustment phase, operators who currently hold authorisations or operate under legacy arrangements may continue their activities under existing approvals, provided they comply with interim reporting obligations and cooperate fully with the RA. All such operators must apply for a Communications Operating Licence (COL) and or spectrum licence within the prescribed 12-month period to maintain their authorisation to operate in Bermuda.

To prevent service disruptions and ensure continuity of critical communications, the RA may, in accordance with criteria established by the Minister, grant temporary exemptions or extensions on a case-by-case basis. These temporary measures will only be approved where operators can demonstrate good-faith efforts toward compliance and where continued operation poses no risk to safety, security, or regulatory integrity.

13. Amendments and Updates

The Amendments and Updates section establishes the procedures for reviewing and modifying the Earth Stations Licensing Framework to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

The Minister responsible for communications and space affairs retains the authority to amend this Framework as necessary to reflect new technological developments, operational models, or international regulatory obligations. Any proposed amendments will be developed by the Ministry of Home Affairs, with input from the RA, the Department of Energy, and other relevant stakeholders, to ensure that updates are evidence-based, transparent, and consistent with Bermuda's strategic objectives.

The ability to update the Framework is critical to maintaining its relevance and effectiveness in a rapidly advancing sector. Regular reviews and amendments will help prevent the Framework from becoming outdated or misaligned with technological innovation.

By maintaining a responsive and forward-looking approach, Bermuda affirms its commitment to fostering innovation, ensuring regulatory excellence, and sustaining its position as a trusted and progressive jurisdiction in the global space industry.

14. Stakeholder Collaboration

By fostering strong stakeholder relationships, Bermuda reinforces its position as a globally connected, forward-looking jurisdiction, capable of supporting innovative space operations while safeguarding public interests, environmental sustainability, and national security. The following stakeholders were consulted when issuing this Framework:

Stakeholder Engagement and Resources:

- Regulatory Authority of Bermuda (RA) – Responsible for oversight, licensing, and compliance monitoring.
- Department of Planning, Parks, DENR, DPLB, BLDC – For site approvals, environmental considerations, and infrastructure planning.
- Industry partners, research institutions, and educational organizations – Contribute technical advice, collaboration, and capacity-building initiatives.

These references and resources ensure that all stakeholders have access to the necessary legal, technical, and procedural guidance for the safe, secure, and compliant operation of Earth Stations in Bermuda.

The Ministry of Home Affairs will work with Bermuda College, the Bermuda school system, and other educational institutions to align the Earth Stations licensing regime with STEM capacity development in Bermuda. Licence holders will be encouraged, and where appropriate to support educational partnerships, internships, and professional training opportunities for Bermudians, and to participate in local supplier development. The objective is a regulatory regime that operates as a vehicle for economic diversification and capacity building

15. Effective Date

This Framework shall come into effect on a date to be determined and will apply to all Earth Stations established or operated in Bermuda from this date forward. Existing operators will be granted a 12-month period to bring their operations into full compliance with the updated licensing, technical, and operational requirements outlined in this Framework.

During this adjustment phase, temporary exemptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis to prevent service disruptions and ensure continuity of critical communications. These transitional provisions are essential to maintaining fairness, stability, and continuity in the sector, providing operators with sufficient time to comply while safeguarding uninterrupted services. Without a transitional framework, operators could face sudden operational halts, potentially leading to significant service disruptions and legal challenges. By implementing these measures, Bermuda ensures a smooth transition to the updated regulatory framework while maintaining its reputation as a responsible and competitive jurisdiction within the global space economy.