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URCA Issues Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Guidelines Consultation Document

On March 24, 2014, the Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA) released its public consultation document namely: *“Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Guidelines – ECS 02/2014”*.

URCA is seeking comments and representations from members of the public, licensees and interested parties in relation to establishing ADR Guidelines that set out the schemes and procedures for resolving disputes between consumers and licensees and between licensees that are referred to URCA. The ADR Guidelines aim to provide practical guidance for the step by step handling of such disputes by URCA and inform the parties to a dispute of the level of response and action they can expect from URCA in the dispute resolution process. The consultation document therefore has the following as its objectives:

- (i) to achieve a core policy objective of the Communications Act, 2009, to further the interest of consumers;
- (ii) to fulfil URCA’s statutory mandate to establish ADR schemes to resolve disputes between consumers and licensees and between licensees; and
- (iii) to ensure that parties to a dispute have access to an independent, fair and effective ADR mechanism.

Under this consultation process, URCA is focused on establishing schemes and procedures that are objective, fair, timely, transparent and equally applied so that parties to a dispute can be confident that their dispute will be effectively and efficiently received and resolved by URCA.

URCA therefore encourages full participation in this consultation process by all stakeholders and interested parties.

The concluding response date to this consultation process is May 2, 2014.

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