



BRRRA CHALLENGES BUSINESS REGULATORS ON EXORBITANT FEES

The Business Regulatory Review Agency (BRRRA) has raised concerns on the exorbitant fees imposed on businesses by regulatory and public bodies.

According to Mr. Dominic Kapalu, the Chairperson of the BRRRA's Board, the Business Regulatory Act No. 3 of 2016 specifies that the fees charged for licences and other business regulations should be merely to defray administrative costs.

During a press briefing, Mr. Kapalu emphasized that if the primary goal of regulatory agencies and public bodies was to generate revenue, businesses may struggle to achieve growth as the high costs of obtaining licenses will hinder their ability to operate.

He highlighted the financial burden on business owners, stating that they are required to pay around Twenty Thousand Kwacha (ZMW20,000) just to operationalise a business.

This, according to Mr. Kapalu, contributes to pushing people into poverty, as the initial cost of starting a business is excessively high.

Mr. Kapalu urged regulatory agencies to play a role in reducing the overall cost of doing business. He emphasised that validity periods for licenses and certificates should confirm with that provided in the Business Regulatory Act, that is for unlimited periods and 3 years respectively.



BRRRA Board Chairperson Dominic Kapalu

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BUSINESSES ENCOURAGED TO UTILIZE NOTICE AND COMMENT PORTAL



Sharon C. K. Sichilongo, BRRRA Executive Director

The Business Regulatory Review Agency (BRRRA) has introduced an online Notice and Comment portal to facilitate prompt feedback from businesses, particularly the private sector, on regulatory issues.

Mrs Sharon Sichilongo, the Executive Director of the BRRRA, highlighted the importance of the portal as a means to gather input and feedback from the public, with a particular emphasis on the private sector. **TO PAGE 3**

The Notice and Comment portal serves as a platform for businesses, including Business Associations, to report on regulatory frameworks that may be burdensome to them or have been introduced without following the due process outlined in the Business Regulatory Act No. 3 of 2014.

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This initiative aims to ensure that the Agency remains vigilant to regulations impacting business activities and that proper procedures are followed in formulation

of business regulations.

During a press briefing held on January 30, 2023, at Taj Pamodzi Hotel in Lusaka, Mrs Sichilongo emphasized the agency's commitment to timely reviewing feedback from the private sector and encouraged businesses to actively use the online portal to provide their input.

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BARRA IMPLORES REGULATORS TO CONDUCT STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

The Business Regulatory Review Agency (BARRA) has implored regulatory bodies and public bodies to undertake stakeholder consultations before introducing any regulations.

BARRA Director for Regulatory Affairs Mr. David Frank Banda said stakeholder consultation was an essential component of policy and law formulation that gives an opportunity for stakeholders to have an input on how the policy or law would affect their business.

Mr. Banda has since commended the Zambia Environmental Management Authority (ZEMA) for conducting stakeholder consultations as part of the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) for the introduction of Regulations under the Environmental Management Amendment Act No. 8 of 2023.

He has since called on stakeholders to actively participate in the consultations as any policy or law which will be passed will directly affect their businesses.

Stakeholder consultations spearheaded by ZEMA started on 22nd January in Lusaka at Government Complex Conference Centre and will run for a period of not less than 30 days.

It is mandatory under the Business Regulatory Act, 2014 for public bodies and regulatory agencies to undertake stakeholder consultations for a period of not less than 30 days with proprietors of business enterprises who will be affected with the proposed regulatory framework as well as those that will benefit from it. Other Government institutions also need to be consulted to ensure that there are no duplicated functions and mandates.



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AMENDMENTS NEEDED FOR SINGLE LICENSING SYSTEM TO WORK



The Business Regulatory Review Agency (BRRA) is actively working towards implementing a single licensing system to address the challenges associated with various licenses that businesses are required to comply with.

The goal is to streamline and simplify the licensing process by consolidating multiple license requirements from different regulatory bodies within a sector or group of businesses under a single regulatory body.

BRRA Board Chairperson Dominic Kapalu emphasized that a Single Licensing System will enhance compliance with multiple license requirements, making it more efficient for businesses to navigate through regulatory processes.

The current system involves obtaining licenses from various legislations, leading to complexities and higher costs of doing business.

BRRA Executive Director Sharon Sichilongo said successful implementation of the single licensing system is hindered by existing legislations and that the cost of doing business will only decrease once these legislations are amended. Mrs Sichilongo emphasized the importance of

regulatory agencies responding and implementing recommended changes under various sectors.

To facilitate the implementation of the single licensing system, BRRA is actively engaging with regulatory agencies and public bodies responsible for overseeing the licenses.

The focus is on expediting the amendment of identified regulations to enable the transition to a more streamlined and cost-effective licensing process.

Feasibility studies have also been conducted in the energy sector and the Daily and Edible Oils sub-sectors which justified the implementation of a single licensing system in these areas.

Overall, the BRRA's initiative aims to create a more business-friendly environment by simplifying regulatory processes and reducing the administrative burden associated with obtaining multiple licenses from different regulatory bodies.

The success of this endeavour depends on legislative amendments, regulatory agency responsiveness, and the implementation of recommended changes.

DID YOU KNOW CORNER

DID YOU KNOW THAT

The Business Regulatory Review Agency is a Statutory Body under the Ministry of Commerce Trade and Industry and was established in accordance with the Business Regulatory Act No. 3 of 2014. It is mandated to ensure an efficient, cost effective and accessible business licensing system.



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