



E-wallet service providers granted official license from March

Electronic wallet service providers will be granted an official license in March 2015, more than five years after the pilot programme was set in motion.

As a payment intermediary service, it will be regulated by instructions given in Decree No. 39/2014/TT-NHNN, issued by the State Bank of Viet Nam (SBV) on December 11.

The e-wallet is created on electronic devices, such as mobile phones, electronic chips and computers, and can be used as a substitute for cash as a payment method. By availing of the e-wallet service, customers will be able to utilise their mobile devices to pay their bills and shop online without taking out money from their traditional wallets or using their cards.

The decree officially recognised the e-wallet as a payment support service, in the same category as cash collection, cash payment and online money transfer.

Organisations that were licensed to provide e-wallets during the pilot programme can complete procedures and submit an official license request to the SBV. The licenses for the pilot e-wallet services will expire in December 2015.

The SBV has asked e-wallet providers not to open more than one e-wallet per bank account. In addition, the providers are requested not to give credit to customers, as well as to not exploit the payment method by increasing the money value on e-wallets.

The providers are required to open accounts for customers to ensure they can pay their bills and to limit risk. The cash balance in this account must never be lower than the total balance of the customer's e-wallets.

Providers are also asked to give refunds to customers in the event of a system breakdown affecting the transactions or when they receive requests to do so. The organisations must have tools that allow the SBV to check and manage the total amount of money in the e-wallets of customers and the total balance of their accounts. Adding money into or withdrawing money from e-wallets must be processed through a payment account held by customers at these banks.

The e-wallet first appeared in Viet Nam in 2008, when the need to provide suitable payment tools to cater to the e-commerce market arose. The SBV gave licenses to nine enterprises to provide pilot e-wallet services, such as VinaPay, Ngan Luong and Payoo.

According to the SBV, there are more than 1.84 million e-wallets in the country registered until the end of 2013. The total transaction amount reached VND23,350 billion (approximately US\$1.1 billion). In 2013, there were over 66 million bank cards with the total amount of transactions reaching VND1.1 billion (\$52 billion) — VNS

Source: <http://bizhub.vn>