



News Release

TRA Launches its 2008 Annual Report

Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain - Wednesday 19 August 2009

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) held today a press conference to announce its achievements and presented its 2008 Annual Report. The press conference was attended by members of the media, TRA's Board of Directors and TRA's management team.

In his opening speech TRA's Chairman Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Al Amer said "TRA can be proud of what it has achieved for consumers, businesses and the economy of the Kingdom of Bahrain for the telecommunications sector." He went on to present an overview of TRA's achievements since liberalisations. Dr Mohammed said "2008 has been an empowering year to consumers. A year that has witnessed more choice of telecommunications services especially fixed wireless broadband using WiMax technology, better value for money and improved customer services. But we still have a long way to go to achieve sustainable competition in all markets especially the international connectivity that will have an impact on the prices and quality of broadband and international calling achieving the objectives of the Kingdom's 2030 economic vision."

2008 witnessed 6% growth in revenues of the Telecommunications Sector, 29% increase in mobile subscribers, Broadband subscribers increased by 50%, while fixed line customers increased by 8% and employment in the sector increased by 4%.

The General Director Mr. Alan Horne gave an update as to the current and future work programme and outlined the key approach being taken by TRA in conducting its duties. Mr. Horne went further to say "TRA is well down the road in ensuring the right regulatory measures are in place to boost further competition into the sector and maximise the benefits to consumers and the Kingdom's economy over the coming years. TRA currently is working on providing other licensees an access to Batelco's copper network reaching consumers' premises to ensure availability of choice to consumer over the existing fixed network. STC is working on deploying its network to be able to launch by end of 2009 or early 2010. Number portability will be available to consumers early 2010 providing consumer with the freedom to change operators and keep the phone number. Consumer protection and competition guidelines are in the pipeline to ensure consumer and competition are protected from unfair practices.

Alan Horne praised the initiatives being taken by Batelco and the other licensees in the investments being made both in the digital backbone within Bahrain and the international

connectivity. The results of these investments will pay dividends in supporting the growth in companies, employment and in attracting new business to the Kingdom.

Mr. Horne concluded his presentation by saying “TRA has strengthened its Team through recruitment of senior Bahraini personnel and skill development, further strengthening the effectiveness of TRA by international best practices. In taking actions of an impact to the market, TRA has an obligation to be fair, reasonable, transparent and open minded to balances all stakeholders interest but with a priority to consumers and national benefits”.

About TRA

Since its establishment in 2002 the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of the Kingdom of Bahrain (TRA) has been working with government, consumers, operators and investors to develop the Kingdom of Bahrain as the regions most modern communications hub and facilitating the growth of the market. As an exemplar Regulator for the region, TRA independently carries out its duties in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner. More information about TRA can be viewed at www.tra.org.bh

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