



New Measure to Develop Competition in Telecom Market

Manama, Bahrain - Monday, 18 August 2008

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) of the Kingdom of Bahrain is making available Batelco's connections, to homes and business, to competing operators. In telecoms terms this is commonly known as "unbundling the local loop".

TRA's General Director Mr. Alan Horne said: "This move is an essential enabler of further competition at the retail level, especially for the provision of high speed broadband. When implemented, it is expected to result in raising the internet access speed without necessarily raising prices as well as increase product innovation and differentiation."

To achieve this measure, TRA today issued an invitation to consultancy firms to submit their proposals, in order to assist in defining the process and procedures required to effectively complete the Local Loop Unbundling (LLU).

Adel Darwish, TRA's Manager for Market and Competition said: "Along with defining the appropriate approach for implementing LLU, the selected consultancy firm will work on producing the detailed required documents to ensure smooth implementation, such as Service Descriptions, Service Level Agreements and Operation Manual. The consultancy firm will closely work with TRA and Batelco to host a series of workshops for the industry, to ensure understanding of the LLU services."

The Telecommunications Law obliges Batelco to provide other licensed operators an access to its local exchanges, allowing them to reach the end consumer. This latest move is aimed at supporting a choice of competitive services over Batelco's access network. The unbundled local loop services will be available to competing licensed operators as an addition to existing Batelco wholesales services

More information regarding the request for proposals document, for defining an appropriate Local Loop Unbundling approach to be implemented in Bahrain, can be viewed on TRA's website (www.tra.org.bh). The Deadline for submitting the proposals is **3:00 pm local time on 16 September 2008**.

About TRA

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) was established by Legislative Decree No. 48 of 2002 promulgating the Telecommunications Law. TRA is an independent body and its duties and powers include, among other things, protecting the interests of subscribers and users and promoting operators effective and fair competition among existing and new licensed. More information regarding TRA can be viewed at www.tra.org.bh

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