



TRA ISSUES EMERGENCY ORDER TO INTERNATIONAL FACILITIES LICENSEES TO BLOCK INTERNATIONAL CALL BACK NUMBER

Manama 19 April 2005 – The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) issued today an emergency order to all licensees holding an International Facilities License (IFL) to immediately block a call back number in Singapore. The order is issued to all IFL licensees namely: Batelco, North Star Communications, MTC Vodafone Bahrain and Mena Broadband Services.

This emergency order was issued after this illegal service was brought to the attention of the TRA by the company offering the service having noticed that call back calls were being made from Bahrain to this number. The call back service is illegal in Bahrain as in many other countries, as it bypasses the licensed providers for international calls.

The General Director of the TRA, Mr. A. Andreas Avgousti made a statement commenting on the order saying: “When it came to our knowledge that this illegal call back service was receiving calls from Bahrain, we took immediate action by issuing this emergency order. The company in Singapore, who has fully cooperated in this matter, has also been asked to block access to this service from Bahrain. However, we had to issue this emergency order to ensure that local operators block this number as well. We take compliance with the telecommunications law and the protection of those who are licensed to provide services in Bahrain very seriously. The TRA will exercise its powers to the maximum extent to ensure that there are no illegal telecommunications activities taking place in Bahrain. This is the first case of its type but if illegal activities come to our attention, such as call back, offering calls through the internet by unlicensed entities, etc, we will take appropriate action to deal with the matter.”

Notes to Editors:

What is international Call Back?

International Call Back service works by calling a designated international number and then hanging up. The number then will call you back and allows other parties to join the call. This way the call originator does not pay his operator the any fees for the international call made.

About the TRA

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

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